

T H E
W E A V E R S
P O C K E T - B O O K

O R,

Weaving Spiritualized.

In a DISCOURSE,
Wherein Men employed in that
Occupation, are instructed how
to raise Heavenly Meditations,
from the several Parts of their
Work.

To which also are added
Some few Moral and Spiritual Observations ; re-
lating both to That and other Trades.

By JOHN COLLINS. D. D.

*Promissio Sanctificat omnia, & reddit pretiosa in con-
spectu Dei ; neque quicquam tam minutum fieri
potest, in vacatione Divinitatis ordinata, quin Deo
placeat. Luther T. 4. in Gen. in c. 46.*

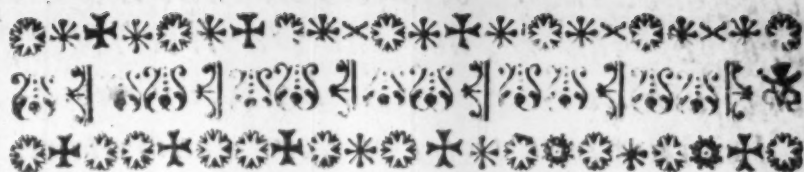
*Job 7. 6. My Days are swifter than a Weaver's
Shuttle.*

Isa. 38. 12. I have cut off like a Weaver my life.

G L A S G O W :

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To his Honoured Friends,

*Bernard Church Esq; and John
Richars Gentleman, Aldermen
of the City of Norwich.*

Worthy and much honoured Friends,

THE design of the following sheets will be so obvious to every eye upon the reading of them, that many words to expound it to you will be perfectly superfluous; it will easily be its own interpreter, both to you and others: Besides, What is needful upon that subject, I shall more fully discourse in my Epistle unto the Reader. My business to you is, but to give you an account of my entitling you unto it: For which it were enough to say, That God hath so blessed you both in that Occupation, which I make the Theme of

the following discourses, as that it hath brought you in, not only, a livelihood, but such an overplus as hath capacitated you not only to serve your generation, in the offices relating to and the principal conduct of that trade, but in other great employments. The one of you hath not only served the city wherein you are in the offices of Sheriff and Alderman, that you both have done but also in the office of Mayor, and that the other too hath not done the same is only from his own reluctancy and also represented this famous city in the highest court of Parliament but also, because you are great examples of that piety, sobriety, and goodness of temper, to which as you will find I have in the following sheets observed this course of life in mens youth doth much tutor, and dispose them; and in being or having been the heads, and conductors of all that are busied in that occupation, you have entituled your selves to all those discourses which may tend to the moral or spiritual improvements of it You will, by the following discourses, see you have no reason to reflect with any blushing, upon

The Epistle Dedicatory. 5

upon the way in which you were in youth trained up; you have eminently served your generation before you fall asleep. The employment of your lives hath not been a making Silver-shrines for Diana; it hath not been a service to the luxury, pride, and wantonness of the generation in which you lived; it hath not been an Apocryphal employment, it hath been employment of a good Dorcas, only you made the stuffs which possibly other pious and devout souls made up. It hath been an employment that hath had a good end and design, upon which in the morning you could warantably go, and pray to God for a blessing; and in the evening say, Prosper thou the work of our hand upon us; Lord prosper thou our handy-work. An employment which hath kept you at home, watching over your families, and which hath brought you in a livelihood, and given you a station in the world, if beneath envy, yet above pity. What hath enabled you to employ the poor, to give portions to six and also to seven? You may look back without a regret, and rejoice in the

6 The Epistle Dedicatory.

the fruit of your labours, seeing many a sober tradesman that you have bred, many a poor person that you have clothed. Your days my worthy and honoured friends are, in a great measure, past, and when you look back upon them you will say they are past, swifter than your shuttles; your week is almost at an end, and you, who have had many a piece of stuff at the end of the week brought home to you must, in a few weeks, or months, or years, be gathered to your fathers, and be no more. Your works will follow you and your selves must carry home to the great Lord of heaven and earth the web which you have weaved. May it please the Lord to bless these discourses to you both, that they may but any way conduce either to augment your comfort, in a reflection upon the work which you have already done, or help you to throw your shuttles well as to the remnant which you have yet to do, that when you carry all home, you may hear that blessed voice, Well done good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful in a little, I will make thee

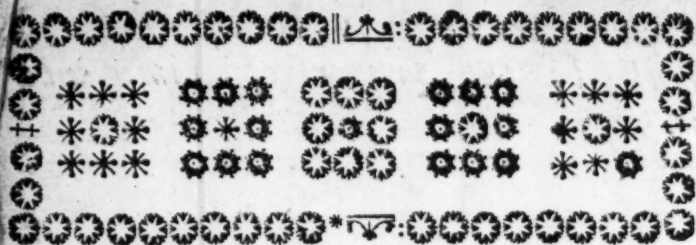
The Epistle Dedicatory. 7

a ruler over much; enter thou into
thy Master's joy): Which is, and
shall be the prayer of him, who
is.

*Your most faithful and affectionate Friend,
and Servant in the Work of the Gospel,*

J O H N C O L L I N S.





To the R E A D E R.

And more especially.

To the Masters, Wardens, and Assistants in the Corporation of Worsted-Weavers, relating to the City of Norwich, together with all my worthy Friends, whether Masters or Journey-men, employed in the art and Mystery of weaving.

A T last (my worthy friends) I have found both leifure and advantage, to testifie both to you, and to the world, the great value and respect, which, for more than
twenty

twenty years, (that is, ever since I understood any thing of you) I have had, as for very many of your persons, so for that occupation wherein you daily are employed; so great (I will assure you) that, for these twenty eight years, I have hardly been consulted by any friend about the disposal of a child, whom I have not advised to your trade: And, but that in the education of a child. *Nihil invita Minerva*, the Genius of the child ought to give a principal conduct, I will assure you, next to the immediate service of God in his gospel, (from which these times deterred me, unless I had enough to have left them to have enabled them to do it freely) I had devoted my sons to your fellowship; nor would any thing have more pleased me as to any son of mine, than to have seen him fancying one of your looms: For I have either taken false measures (which yet I think I have not) or no employment which I have in

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my

my eye, hath superiour advantages to you, if equal with you, to serve all the nobler ends of man's life. Were I to be your orator, I think I have topicks enough by me to perswade any person, that nothing can commend a trade to a wise-man, but what is to be found in yours: some of those things you will find enlarged upon, in the first of my observations in the following sheets. My thoughts that it was a pity, that such a number of persons employed in so excellent an employment as you are, should want any advantages to help you from looms unto heaven, is that which hath engaged me this service; a design which, for some years, I have had in my thoughts, even ever since I saw *Mr. Flavel's Navigation and Husbandry Spiritualized*: But many of you know, that, from my youth upward, my hand hath been full of employments, and my latter years more full than my former. More than forty years
of

of my life were spent without much care what to eat or drink; since that time those cares have also been upon me, and made my work something more than to consider what subject next to preach upon, and how to handle it. These few sheets, by reason of this, were taken in hand again and again, and as often laid aside, at last a very few days have finished the greater part of them, and for some of that leisure you may thank some informers, too. It is a noble design to instruct people how to spiritualize every object, and a nobler practice for any to do it. Our blessed Lord made it his business to take all advantages to commend to his disciples and hearers spiritual meditations on earthly objects: The sight of bread, John 6, brings forth that excellent sermon about the, *bread of life*. His asking of water of the woman of *Samaria*, gave him an occasion to discourse of the *living water*, *which whoso drinks shall thirst*

no more. And it is more than probable, that his sight of a shepherd with his flock of sheep; and of a vine, gave occasion to those excellent sermons, *John 10, John 15.* It is the great disadvantage of most worldly employments, that they have a natural tendency to divert the soul from God; upon which account I remember it was, that holy Mr. *Palmer* preferred the work of the ministry to all the employments of the world, as leading the soul directly to the meditations of God, and whose workly in a communion with him, whereas all other employments bent the soul another way. I know no better way to remedy this disadvantage, from the nature of your work, than by shewing you how you may make it an advantage to you. This is the very business of these few sheets. *Brethren!* Give me leave to tell you all, *That my heart's desire and prayer to God for you, is, that you may be saved.* Tho' I have a just
regret

regret and compassion for any soul, that I see like to perish eternally; yet methinks, I have a juster and sadder regret for any industrious souls. I would not have one of them perish eternally, whom I see so industrious to take pains, that they and their families might live a few years comfortably in this life. There is a generation of men that are too lazy to go to heaven, or to live here, but upon the alms and spoils of others; it had been good for them they had never been born, and it had been also good for the world they never had been born; for their lives in it are of no further use, than to defile, and to devour, and to disturb it. If such men perish, let them perish, we having given them a due warning. But methinks it pities my soul to think, that a weaver should eternally perish: A weaver, whom I see before four of the clock in the morning, and after 8, 9, 10 at night, hard at work; that one so patient
of

of labour for the *Bread that perisheth*, so patient of self-denial in the sports and pleasures which others spend their life in, and all for a few shillings at the end of the week; I say, that such an one, after the long toil of his laborious life, should at last ly down in hell, this goes very near me: And I cannot but say sometimes, surely we (who are the Lord's ministers) do not instruct these men enough; we do not press the thoughts of eternity upon them as we ought to do. These are a people that are not too lazy to be saved, they are men that can work night and day in their earthly masters work, for a livelihood for their bodies; surely, if we could persuade them they had souls, and those immortal souls; That they are beings ordained to an eternity; That eternal happiness is not to be got by a loom; but by *Believing, reading, hearing, prayer, self-denial, taking up Christ's cross, mortification of beloved lusts*, they might be

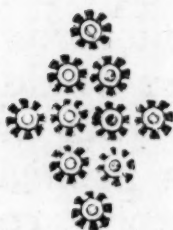
be perswaded to spend some time every day in reading, praying, some time in hearing; to spend some time in searching and trying their ways, that they may turn unto the Lord. I know that when we have done and said what we can, old *Adam* (as he said) will be found too hard for young or old *Melancthon*. *The way of man is not in himself, neither is it in man to direct his steps:* But shew me that person who hath done what in him lyes towards his own salvation, to whom God hath denied his free, but effectual grace. My good friends! You know I cannot from the pulpit, as formerly, speak unto you; if I could, neither were this a fit theme to discourse there; neither would the sound of my words in your ears abide with you, so as a printed book may, I have on purpose contracted my discourse into a few sheets, that it may be a burden not too heavy for an ordinary purse. I propose to my self nothing of gain in it. If I may
but

but gain one soul, it is enough; if not, I have but my *labour for my pains*, as we say in our English proverb. I would willingly help on your salvation, and shew my love and kindness to an industrious people: I have nothing else but my poor prayers, by which I can shew my self.

*Your faithful Friend and Servant,
in the Work of the Gospel.*



J. C.





T H E

Art of *Weaving* Spiritualized.

C H A P. I.

Exod. xxxv. 35. *Them hath he filled with Wisdom of Heart, to work all Manner of Work of the Ingraver,--and of the Weaver, &c.*

The MEDITATIONS.

Seet. 1. **T**HE work here in hand was the making a tabernacle, a moving house for the Lord God of Israel: The workmen are nominated by God himself ver. 30. *The Lord hath called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur: And verse 34, Aholiab the son of Ahisamach. (It is reasonable the master of the house*
 C *should*

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should appoint his own workmen.) These he filled with his Spirit in wisdom, understanding, knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship. God never sends any to his work, but he first furnisheth them with tools fit to do it. Those who are busied at works for which they are not spirited and enabled, (whoever sends them) are not sent by God. As he fitted these workmen with wisdom of heart to work all work, so particularly it is said, And of the weaver.

*Sect. 2. The art of weaving then hath a divine original. Naamah the sister of Tubal-cain, (mentioned Gen. 4. 22. might be the first spinstrefs or weaveress, (as Genebrard thinks) the scripture tells us her brother was the first workman in brass and iron) if she first learned others, yet 'tis certain God first taught her. If Closterus first made spindles, his God first taught him that discretion. And if Naamah first wrought in looms, yet, as the prophet saith of the threshers discretion, *Isaiah 28. 29. This also**



also came from the Lord of Hosts, who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working. If weaving (as the philosopher thinks) was learnt from the spider, yet the spider hath it from the Lord *mighty in counsel*. He that teacheth the warrior's hands to war, and his fingers to fight, teacheth the weaver also to mix his yarns, and to throw his shuttle.

Sect. 3. The weavers trade then is canonical. An employment of which God is not ashamed to be called the Father, as to which he is pleased to imploy his own Spirit. 'Tis good to be in a calling as to which we can say, *That God hath called us to it*. Pious parents may have a little too much zeal, in refusing all but scripture names for their children, (the scriptures it self borrows childrens names, from words significant of mercy and duty) but those parents are as much too careless, who think they may give their children the names of Pagan idols, or otherwise foolish

and insignificant. There may be particular employments lawful enough, which are not canonized by holy writ, all things were not written; what should the world then have done with the books! Trades are for necessary uses, and every employment of that nature not serving to maintain wickedness, or merely to debauch the world with wantonness and luxury, are doubtless lawful, whether we can derive them from scripture or no: But certainly it is a satisfaction to a pious tradesman, when he can find the name of his trade written in that book of life. This you see the weaver may, if he cannot derive from *Naamah*, yet he may derive from *Bezaleel* and *Aholiab*, and they both derived from God.

Sect. 4. These weavers were working for the tabernacle. Weaving then doth not only derive from God, but may be *useful for God*, and that in services which, in the first degree, are acceptable to him. The excellency

lency of a trade derives from its usefulness; the nobleness of it from the particular use to which it may be serviceable. A trade can serve no higher use than that of the *tabernacle*. This the weavers trade is here serviceable unto. Your bodies (saith the apostle) *are temples of the holy Ghost.* 1 Cor. 6. 19. The temple and tabernacle differeth not in their end, but in their foundation only ornament. The temple was fixed, the tabernacle moving. The tabernacle in a more travelling habit than the temple. Both *houses for the Lord God of Israel.* The temple is made the *figure of Christ,* John 2. Weaving then may be serviceable unto the Lord Jesus Christ, yea it is so serviceable. *Let not the Eunuch say, I am a dry tree:* Let not the weaver say, I am a poor mean trade. He who in his trade serves the highest uses, may contend with the noblest tradesman; let not the weaver say then, that he is of a *mean trade in Israel,* of a family *lightly esteemed*

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steemed of. Kings servants have no contemptible notion. The dignity of a trade is not beholden to the world's estimate, but to its own usefulness. He that can work for a tabernacle, works for the highest end.

Seet. 5. But there is a difference yet betwixt *working for the tabernacle,* and *working in the tabernacle:* Bezaleel and Aholiab *work for it,* but Aaron and his sons *only must work in it:* And *no man taketh that honour to himself* (saith the apostle) *but he who is called of God as Aaron was.* Let every man (saith the apostle) *abide in the calling to which God hath called him.* When I consider the composition of the tabernacle, I find there no work for the weaver, but in the making the fine linnen, in covering the *wool offered of blue, purple, and scarlet,* or working the goats hair offered, into webs, making the hangings for the court, and the door of the court and the *clothes of service,* the *holy garments for Aaron the priest,* and for
his

his sons to minister in; yet is not this to be despised: He that makes but a curtain for the Lord's tabernacle, certainly hath as high an office, as he who is but a door-keeper in the house of the Lord; which *David* preferred before a dwelling in the tents of wickedness. Surely it is better to make a garment for *Aaron*, than a shrine for *Diana*. The lowest room in heaven is heaven, (saith a grave Author) though it be but behind the door. *Uzzah* must not touch the Ark, (tho' a *Levite*) nor *Saul*, nor *Uzzah* offer sacrifices, though both great princes. God's church is like an army which must march in rank and file: God (saith the apostle) is a God of order, and not of confusion. The weaver shall have his wages working for the tabernacle, though he wears not, but only weaves the holy garments; if he offers not a Bullock, yet he offers a Turtle-Dove and young Pigeons, he serves the Lord Christ, though
it

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it be not at the altar; and doth any serve him for nothing?

Sect. 6. But the house in *Shiloh* is pulled down, and there is no more going up to *Gibeon*; yea there is not *one stone left upon another*, either in *Solomon's*, or *Zorobabel's*, or *Herod's* temple; the curtains are rent in pieces, and the holy garments are worn out, is then the weavers trade antiquated? Or, is the usefulness of it for the temple abolished? Or, need we to devise new holy garments for priests to intitle them to an employment for God? And must hanging of *blue, purple and Scarlet*, again be made necessary? No surely, *Know you not* (saith the apostle to the Christian *Corinthians*) *that your bodies are the temples of the holy Ghost*; Temples in which the Lord dwells, even *he who dwells not in temples made with hands*. If the weaver cannot yet see himself at work for God's tabernacles, the fault is in his own eyes, or in the lust of his own heart. He that
works

works for the clothing of the naked, is doubtless at work for God's tabernacle, nay, for that fixed temple, which he hath set up amongst the sons of men; *For the poor* (saith our Lord) *you have always with you.* The weaver that made our Lord's seamless coat, understood not what he did, but had a noble employment: That coat was to cover the person who was the eternal Son of God, but he never made more than that one for such an use. *Me* (saith Christ) *you have not always.* He who wore that was presently to put on the *garments of glory*; but he that weaves for his members hath a more standing work for God, and so seems to be more blessed in his employment. Our Saviour corrected the devout woman that cried out, Luke 11. 27. *Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked,* by adding verse 28, *Yea, rather blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.* Doth any think, blessed was that weaver which wove the seamless

D

coat

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coat for him who was his Saviour, who was an instrument to clothe him with the robe in which he was an instrument to clothe him with the robe in which he was to appear before *Pontius Pilate*, who was to clothe all the elect *with that garment of righteousness, in which they are to appear before their father in heaven?* Surely we may say, *Yea rather blessed are they, who are imployed, not in making coverings for the temple that was destroyed, and in three days raised up again, but for the living temples of the most high God; if indeed, as they prepare clothing, so they also clothe the naked; I was naked, and ye clothed me.* Mat. 25. 36.

Sect. 7. But what is this? God filled them with wisdom of heart, to do all manner of work,---of the weaver. How doth the eternal God humble himself to behold, not only the things done in heavens, but upon the earth? Who is like unto the Lord who dwelleth on high? (saith the Psalmist upon this very argument) He clothed the grass of the

the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven: And all flesh is grass, (saith the prophet) this grass he clotheth also. How low doth the lofty eye descend? The wheel is turned upon the cummin, and the fitches are not threshed out with a threshing instrument, but beaten out with a staff. The bread corn is bruised, because he will not be ever threshing it, nor break it with the wheel of his cart, nor bruise it with horsemen. This also cometh from the Lord of hosts. Isa. 27. 28, 29. This! What! This discretion, verse 26. His God doth instruct him to discretion and teach him. The weaver would not have known which way to have fastned his warp, or ordered his woof, or directed his shuttle, or mixed his yarns, but for a discretion taught him by the Lord of Hosts. Blessed God! How great art thou in all things? And never greater than in the least of things. How little do we know thee, or consider thee, who yet art ever at our fingers ends? What a meditation this is for a weaver at his loom! Is it the Lord

of hosts, that influenceth my hand even in this moment to throw this shuttle, and influenceth my mind with discretion to order these threads, to move these several utensils of my trade so as they serve the end which I design. What a God do I serve, who is present with me while I sit here at my poor contemptible employment, who humbleth himself to help me to work, and influenceth me to work better than my neighbour? Have I more discretion than my fellow-labourer in the same chamber? *This also cometh from the Lord, who is mighty in counsel, and wonderful in working.*

Seet. 8. I am therefore (certainly) obliged to be humble: If I can invent a new stuff which another cannot (with all his industry) hit upon if I can better order my yarns, my colours, if I can better order my work, or throw my shuttle more nimbly, and bring a piece quicker off the loom; I have no reason to despise him that cannot be so quick, or sagacious as my self; for what
have

have I *which I have not received* from him who is 'mighty in counsel?' To despise the diligent person, or my dull companion, that is not sottish, and wilfully negligent in his work, is but to reproach my maker; and he was mine as well as his: I derived no more of my soul than he did from his mother, and they are the nimbler exercises of that, not of my terrene earthly part, which discovers this ingenuity. But I have infinite reason to be thankful to that God, who hath thus given me that power to get riches, which he hath denied to him that works in the same chamber with me. Certainly I stand obliged to 'do more than others,' for that God who hath done more for me than for others of my own trade. This common gift obligeth me to special duty, because it is not common to me with all, though it be common to me with others who never tasted special and distinguishing grace.

Sect. 9. Now what should the weavers do more? Doubtless love,
honour

honour, serve that God more; but these are generals. Of old the first fruits were to be offered unto the Lord: 'To do good, and to distribute' (*saieth the apostle*) forget not; for 'with such sacrifices God is well pleased.' Distributions fall under the two notions of feeding the hungry, and clothing the naked. The latter of these directly referred to the weavers trade. I have heard, that a late learned lawyer, in this nation, during his whole life, would lay aside every tenth fee for pious and charitable uses. Our law obligeth the lawyer to give his pains to him or her that will plead in *forma pauperis*. If you can think of nothing else whereby to shew your gratitude to God, yet this you cannot over-look because ever in your eye. This is to honour God with your *substance*, and *with your increase*; your increase lyeth in making clothing for the naked. Let your friends, when you are gone, be able (as the friends of *Dorcas*) to *bring forth the clothes*, which, *when alive, she had made*

made for the poor. Let me tell you, That God is the best merchant you can part with a piece of stuff to; he indeed sometimes takes day to see if his weavers can trust him, but, as he pays certainly, so he pays to the best profit; "He that casts his bread ' upon many waters, shall after ' many days find it;" and so shall he that throws a piece of cloth or stuff there. He shall find it in that day, when God shall say to them on his right-hand, "I was naked, and ye clothed me."

Sect. 10. But if I must be filled " with the wisdom of God, to work ' all manner of work of the weaver;" if this cometh from the Lord, then much more to ' work any spiritual work.' If there must be a special influx of providence, beyond what ordinary souls of workmen have, (possessed of an understanding and will of the same species with mine) upon me, to make me a better workman, to invent a new piece of stuff, to judge of its acceptableness to people the next year, better than
another

another of the same trade with me, that hath the same understanding and will that I have. What an influence of God must it require to perform a spiritual service that shall be acceptable unto God? Cannot I mix my colours as I would? And may I repent or believe if I will? It is not in my power to make a piece of stuff, of which I have the pattern which lies before me, and for which I have the materials? And is it in my power to do an action truly and spiritually good, though I have patterns before me, though I have the same rational soul, that he hath that doth it? He that denieth distinguishing spiritual habits, referring to truly spiritual acts, will be forced to acknowledge a distinguishing common gift given to the weaver and not to another; the one can invent, the other cannot; the one can judge better, whether a piece of stuff will next year take: the one can do his work more neatly, and acceptably to every eye. Man hath not his will so far free, that though he hath
learned

learned his trade, and would fain invent and judge, and mix his colours, and work up, and off his ware as well as another; yea, tho' he hath the same yarns, he cannot do it. Let then the *Arminian* go and dispute with the weaver, and first make him believe, that he may invent as happily as his neighbour, and make as good work as he if he will; let him tell him, that the reason why he doth it not, is not natural but moral impotency, because he cannot prevail with himself to be willing to do it; will not the experience of every poor industrious weaver confute him? Surley the experience of a Christian, to as actions truly spiritually and formally good, will confute him much more.

Sect. 11. What an argument also is this for contentation with the lot which God hath given us, and the station in the world which he hath willed us to take up. The world is but a great army, set in rank and file, by the Lord, the Lord of hosts: What if one be a Lieutenant-Gen-
E eral

eral, others Colonels, and Captains, and Commission-Officers in it, and others be but *milites gregarii*, ordinary common soldiers; it is the great General that hath ordered the one, and the other to their stations, and hath fitted the one and the others for their works. What if God will have the Princes, the Nobles, the judges, to sit all day on the throne of judgment, and to employ themselves in cutting out right to every man, whiles he willeth me to sit in my loom, and employ my self all the day in throwing the shuttle; we both are influenced by the same spirit. On them rests the spirit of wisdom and judgment; on me also (in my model) the Spirit of wisdom, from whence I work the work of the weaver. As I am influenced by God to my work, as well as those that take up higher stations, and assisted by God in it; so I have also an opportunity in it, to shew myself serviceable to God, serviceable to my generation. The Magistrates work is to defend; the rich man's work is to feed; mine is to clothe the naked.

naked. I can pray for a blessing upon my loom, because it works for the necessary uses of mankind. Do I work in a lower orb than some others do? Yet I serve no lower master; I work for no lower end than they do. Let not the weaver say then. *My family is poor in Israel*, my trade is lightly esteemed of. Fools rate things by appearance, and sacrifice their judgments to vulgar applause. Wise men judge according to reality. Can that trade be contemptible, which the wise God learneth us, in which the spirit of God assisteth us, and which serveth one of the greatest uses of the sons of men? If therefore thou beest bred no higher than to be a weaver, yet be therewith content. Paul had learnt to be so in every state. Let thy mind abide in that calling to which the Lord hath called you; say not, O if I had been a merchant, if I had been a draper, &c. They both derive from thee; and the *Spirit of wisdom*, to work all manner of work, even that of the weaver, doth far more visibly work in thee,

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than in the one or the other of them:
There is far less wisdom exercised
by them, in proportioning pieces
in contriving advantageous trans-
portations, than in thy invention of
thv stuff, mixing and contriving thy
yarns, &c. The spider certainly shews
us more of God than the butterfly.
The silk-worm is a far greater mira-
cle of divine wisdom, than any o-
ther insect,

The P O E M.

*Then rest my soul ; thou hast enough ;
Thou servest, God in weaving stuff.
Thou servest, and may'st serve him more,
Clothing the good, but naked, poor.
Thou servest men ; and serv'st them in
Employment, where thou serv'st not sin ;
Thou servest not their luxury,
But only their necessity.
'Tis not my work t'improve a mine,
Making diana's silver-shrine ;
Nor to make ribbons, no, nor lace ;
Nor patches for a wanton's face ;
Nor any idle instrument
Of pride, which men may better want.
If stuffs may be abused too,
That taylor, and not weavers do.
The weaver is no low-born trade.
Spiders by God at first was made.
'Tis God that giveth a wise heart*

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*To me, to work the weavers art,
Blest Lord! Let me a weaver be,
So I may weave a piece for thee.*



C H A P. II.

*The Weavers Materials; Wool, Silk,
Hair, Hemp Flax Cotton &c.*

The MEDITATIONS.

Sect. I. **T**HE weavers trade is of great antiquity, yet not coevous to the fall of Adam; that first indeed discovered nakedness, (which makes the usefulness of this art) but the art was not discovered as soon as shame made a necessity of clothes. Our first parents first *sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves aprons.* Genes. 3. 7. or something to gird about them. Here God himself was the weaver, and Adam and Eve were their own taylors. We know not the dimension of the trees, or leaves, or fruits of those fruitful places: But (be what it will) the protection a fig-leaf could give, must necessarily be very ordinary

dinary, and covering the very scant. The Hebrew therefore saith no more than that they made garments, covering those parts which nature teacheth us to hide. The extremities of cold and heat, which sin had now made more afflictive, and the fast coming up of the thorns and thistles, to which the earth (for man's sake) was quickly condemned, soon discovered need of better clothes than fig-trees could afford. When weaving certainly began is, hard to say; but, if what some would have, one of the daughters of *Lamech* began it, it must be by that time the world had been 1651 years in being. Be that as it will, we know within a thousand years after, *Bezaleel* and *Aholiab* were skilled in it. We know, that in the tabernacle were curtains of fine *twined linnen*. *blue, purple and scarlet*, which certainly refer to woollen. We know also there were *curtains of goats hair*. *Exod. 26. 7.* Of silk indeed we read nothing, that I remember, till *Proverbs 31.* It should seem by some of the *Roman historians*

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historians, that it was a rare commodity 284 years after our Saviour: *Aurelian* the emperor therefore would wear no clothes, whose warp and woof were both silk; for (saith my author) a pound of silk was then of the same value with a pound of gold. It was 555 years after Christ before any great plenty of silk was discovered in *Europe*. *Procopius* tells us, we were then beholden to two monks for it, who brought some silk-worms eggs from the *Indies* to *Justinian* the emperor. The use of the other materials was much more ancient. Hemp, flax, and cotton-wool, are vegetables: wool, silk, and hair are the product of sensitive creatures. The whole creation is made up of things that have a mere being; such are the elements, stars, &c. or such things as have life, and no more added to being; such are all vegetables, plants, &c. or such as being and to life, have also sense added; and therefore are called sensibles: Such are all beasts, whether those that have four feet or more, such are sheep, goats,

goats, worms, flies, and all insects; or such as have being, life, and sense, and reason also; such is man. The angels are a noble part of the creation too, and have being life and reason, but not sense in that manner as man, who exerciseth the faculties of his soul by bodily organs, which they want. Two of those great hosts of God contribute, and prove little enough to cover man's nakedness. The host of vegetables afford hemp, flax and cotton; the sensitives wool, hair and flax: Both would hide man's shame. Man hath eaten of the tree of forbidden fruit, and lieth naked in his tent. The devils mock him in his lapsed estate. The sensitives and vegetables jointogether, to bring him wherewith to cover his shame. The poor worm spins herself to death; For him he sheep casts her coat; the goats and camels suffer themselves to beclipped; the tree sends out cotton-wool; the plants grow and die. How doth the whole creation freely serve him, who can hardly find an heart to serve his or their maker!

Sect.

Seet. 2. *Thou hast* (saith the *Psalmist*) *made him to have dominion over the works of thy hands, thou hast put all things under his feet.* Psal. 8. 6. That those which merely have being, are at his command, or under his feet, is plain: He treadeth upon the earth, he turns the water this or that way, as serveth his concern, he lets in, or keeps out the air. But see also the vegetables and sensitives serving him. The sheep before the shearers is dumb, other beasts are patiently spoiled of their hair. The hemp and flax are pilled. The cotton-tree is content to lose its issue every year, that man might be clothed. The Ox, the sheep, and either of their off-spring dies that he might be fed; so do the feathered fowl and fish. At what a rate, to the consumption of the creation, doth man live? When tempting our Saviour they brought to him a question, *Is it lawful to pay tribute to Cæsar or is it not?* He calls for a piece of coin, and querieth whose *superscription and image* it bare? They say unto him

F

Cæsar's

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Cæsar's. Mark our Lord's application; *Render therefore unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's.* Doth the weaver dispute, whether he should pay his homage to God, yea or no? Let him look upon the parcel of hair, wool, filk, hemp, flax, cotton, which being first twisted into yarn, he by and by fasteneth to his loom, and say, *Whose image and superscription is here?* His own heart must make him answer, God's. It is not in the power of all the sons of men to make one of these things; and out of these he gets his livelihood, and in the use of these things he and thousands of others live. How reasonable a thing is it, that he should serve that great Lord, who makes thus his whole Creation to serve him! It is his wool, his hair, his flax, his hemp, his filk, that the weaver useth: Were there not a God in the world there could have been no such things. Surely then he should not leave without a God in the world. If there be a God that loadeth us with his benefits:

benefits: there is a God to receive our homages; with what a thankful heart should the weaver fasten his materials to his loom? With what fear should he walk, lest he should provoke God to recover at his hand his *wool, and his flax, which he hath given us to cover our nakedness?* Hosea 2. 9.

Sect. 3. "The whole creation
" (saith the apostle, Romans 8. 22.)
" groaneth and travelleth in pain
" until now. Verse 20. It was made
" subject to vanity, not willingly,
" but by reason of him who hath
" subjected the same in hope. Be-
" cause it shall be delivered from
" the bondage of corruption into
" the glorious liberty of the sons of
" God." *P. Martyr* saith, the crea-
ture is subjected to a four-fold va-
nity. 1. As for man's service it is
wearied with a dayly labour. 2. As
it is punished for man's error. 3. As
it suffers together with man. 4. As
it is made subject to man's lust. God
hath put it in the three first menti-
oned subjects, and in them acts
F 2 effectively,

effectively, as to the last he acteth but permissively. The silk-worm spinneeth, and dyeth for us in compass of a few weeks space; there's its vanity. The plant grows up and dies, and rots for us to make us threed for our nakedness. The beast parts with its own covering for us; there's a part of their vanity. They have to none of these a natural propension, but God hath subjected them in hope, and they are patiently subject; the *sheep before the shearer openeth not its mouth*. But man hath made it subject to a greater vanity than any of these. God created these things and subjected them to serve our necessities; 'tis man, sinful man, that hath made them to lacquey his lusts and corruptions. The silk worm never bequeathed the spinning of its life for the maintenance of pride, and hindrance of good works. The sheep never yielded its wool to cover the nakedness of the earth, but the nakedness of man. This is one way by which we make even God himself to serve with our iniquities.

iniquities This is one thing which makes the creation groan for the *Day of Judgment*, Rom. 8. 22. Because it shall then be delivered from this bondage of corruption.

Sect. 4. But yet methinks the difference of the weavers materials speak some order, which is God's will. Amongst men wool is coarser than silk, hair is a medium betwixt them both, hemp is grosser than flax, and cotton again is betwixt them both. Our Saviour *Matthew* 11. 8. allows a soft raiment, to them that are in Kings houses. There are some whom God himself covers with silk, and fine linnen, and broidered work. *Ezekiel* 16. 13. God doth no more will a levelling for clothes, than orders of persons or estates. The silk-worm is God's creature as well as the goat, sheep, camel badger, &c. and created for man's use. The virtuous woman my cover her self with silk, and purple. *Proverb.* 31. 20, 22, These things may be upon our backs, so they be not in our hearts; and certainly the heart of
man

man is too noble a thing to receive what a poor worm hath vomited out from her intrails. *Mind not high things* saith the apostle; let others (if they please) buy our silk, know the station which God hath willed us to take up in the world above them; but let us still remember we are but dust and ashes, and that our silks remove us from our neighbours, but some few steps as to external order: They are the same flesh and blood with us, and have souls of the same species equally ordained to an eternity, and equally capable of a blessed eternity. silk is lawful; but it must be used lawfully. Whether *Dorcas* ever wore any or no, I cannot tell; but whoever wears, it will be concerned, that others may, like her executrices, Acts 9. 39, be able to shew the *coats and garments* which they have made for the poor. If silken garments eat up our ability for charity, the silk-worm groans for it and is by it put in bondage to corruption and certainly some order is to be observed also. God had never

ver provided us wool and hair as well as flax, if he had not intended some difference in our habits according to our stations. As it is an ugly sight to see princes go on foot, and servants riding on horse-back; so 'tis no very comely spectacle to see the servant ride cheek by jowl with his master. Let not costly garments devour our good works; and God hath not forbidden them. It is noted of *Henry II. King of France*, that he could never be perswaded to wear silk-stockings, though then in use in his nation. Let us not nourish high opinions of our selves, let them be used to shew the difference which the providence of God hath made amongst men, as to the place he wills they should take up in the world, and they may be worn innocently: But the weaver is not concerned here; he may weave it, let others take heed how they use it.

Sect. 5. But whence is this silk I am winding upon my loom? Let me stand still a little and see this great sight. 'Tis the product of a noble creature

creature, than which, whether the creation affords more stupendious, I cannot say. In the spring it is a little grain, egg, or seed, hardly exceeding the quantity of a small pin's head, it is enlivened by a strange generation in its time, about the season that the mulberry-tree beginneth to shoot forth; it groweth up by degrees, being fed with the leaves of Mulberies, till having done its work and spun out its bottom, it vomiteth it out of its mouth, and soon after (having first cast its seed) dies. Men wind off this silk thus made, and wave it into a web, and of this are made the most costly, and ornamental garments; *who hath despised the day of small things?* How great is God in the little things of nature? Yea, in the least greatest? Methinks, this worm represents to us Christians, our Lord and Saviour: How little was he 'in the day wherein he was born? How did he nothing himself? (To use the apostle's expression) *He made himself of no reputation.* How was he enlivened into
an

an human life by a strange generation? How little a while did he, when he had taken flesh, dwell amongst us? What was his meat and drink while he lived here, but to feed on the mulberry-tree of the divine law, first planted in *Sinai*? To do his father's will, which when he had done, he died, leaving us a righteousness to cover our nakedness, a glorious robe with which we may appear in the house of the king of glory? But as man hath something to do before the silk-worm's legacy will be useful for him; so hath the Christian that will be clothed with this silk and brodered garment. The silk-worm leaves the silk upon the cod, men may neglect or use it as they please; even Christ's righteousness profiteth none without faith. 'Tis true we have no web to make, no woof to add to this warp, (as *Papists* do in their linsley-woolsey righteousness) but we must put it on, and we must walk therein.

Sect. 6. Whence is this wool, which twisted into yarn, I am fastning into
G my

my loom or shuttle? Was it not the covering of the sheep, that loseth its coat to make man a covering? As this sheep before its *shearers* was dumb, so opened not my Lord his mouth.

1. Lord! What is vain man proud of? What hath he on his back but a coat that was upon a pitiful sheep's back, before it came upon his, or the product of a silk-worm's excrements, or the clippings of a camel? Why are they so lifted up for *their changeable suits of apparel and ornaments*? Are their clothing of silver and gold? It is yet but a covering of thick clay. The sheep, when it had it on, was meek and lowly; how comes man to be proud and haughty? What hath made the difference between a fleece of wool, and a piece of gay stuff, or fine cloth, but the art of some poor men? 2. This sheep *before the shearers openeth not its mouth*; it knew not but it was going to the shambles, in understood not that it was going to be shorn for the use of men, yet *it opened not its mouth*. Upon this account Christ was also compared
to

to be offered as a sacrifice for us, to lay down his life for us, that we might have a righteousness through him; *Yet he* (saith the prophet, and twice repeats it) *opened not his mouth.* What patience should it learn us in the time of God's sheep-shearing: 'Tis true, our wool will make no garments for naked souls, but it will be encouraging to fearful and faint-hearted Christians. The sheep is shorn that it may bear wool against the next and further years. Oh! Let us remember that we also are purged that we may bring forth more fruit.

Sect. 7. But whence hath this wool this strength? Nothing more feeble than a single hair of wool in the fleece. Every child can pull a lock of wool in pieces, how comes it to be so strong in yarn, and much stronger when it is woven into cloth or stuff? It is nothing but the twisting of the hairs or threads together. *O! How good a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity?* Psalm 134. 7. The dying father's children could easily break

the arrows given them singly, but the sheaf they could not break, though there were nothing in the sheaf but the single arrows. *Vis unita fortior.* The weaver's yarn and his web, both learn him the great lesson of brotherly love, and cannot but afford him this meditation, how strong were Christians, were they but all united in love. They are all contending for truth in their several different forms, and little paths of religion; but why should they not, as the apostle would have them, *Speak the truth, and contend for the truth, and yet in love?* The church of God will never be perfectly *terrible like an army with banners*, till love be the colours. The cross hath been in her ensigns a long time, but it hath been in a bloody field.

Sect. 8. How many different acts have been done to this yarn, before it comes to the state wherein it is, yet more must be done before it will be a covering for men and women: It must be fastned to a loom and to a shuttle, the warp and woof must be
united

united by the weaver's industry, it must then be dyed, prest, sealed, &c. before it is fit for a market; what a work here is! How many hands are busied to repair but one influence of the fall of *Adam*, to cover that bodily nakedness which that unhappy day discovered? But how much more must be done to provide that in the great day of the Lord, the Son of *Adam* may not walk naked? Man is but the weaver in the case. Christ indeed hath provided him materials, the wool is from him who was as the dumb sheep before the shearers; yea, he was as the weaver too. All was finished in point of satisfaction when he gave his last groan upon the cross; and as to that man hath nothing to do but to put it on; but yet even that garment must be put on, nor is it ever truly put on, without another also of divers colours. We must also be clothed with humility, put on charity, meekness, long-suffering, forgiving and forbearing one another. Christ indeed hath merited for his elect the habits of
grace,

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grace, which adorn the saints, but the acts and exercise of them are ours in his strength.

Sect. 9. I cannot, in the variety of the weaver's materials, but read
‘ how good a God we have, who doth
‘ not only consult and provide for
‘ our necessities, but our ease, and
‘ the accommodation of our infirmities.” If the large heart of our God could have satisfied it self in shewing love to his creatures, by giving them necessities, it had been enough for him to have fitted the world with sheep, and have afforded us a little coarse wool that would have covered our nakedness, and secured us from the violence of weather, and is most proper for it; but this would have been harsh to our tender skins: He therefore affords us hemp and flax, which better suit them for inward garments. Wool would have kept us warm, but in summer too warm: He hath therefore provided us silk, fine linnen, &c. And for those whose purses will not reach so far, he hath provided us finer wools,
taught

taught the spinster to draw it into finer threads, and the weaver to bring it into a finer web: Nay, he hath not only provided us for necessity and delight, but for ornament also: With what a liberal hand doth his bounty give to us? Shall we now be narrow-hearted towards him? Shall we enquire only for the least degree of grace, (abating only for hours of temptations) for a least of good works which may evidence grace? Look and see if God thus deals with us; we have food and raiment for our delight as well as for necessity. Nay, let us strive that all active grace may abound in us, that we be rich in good works, as all kind of grace from God doth abound to us. If there be a work of supererogation to be done, surely we stand obliged to do it: Let us never ask, whether we have not done enough for God; but still, whether there be no more to be done for him? Doth not God think it enough to clothe our nakedness, but he will delight us with our clothes, he will adorn us in clothing?

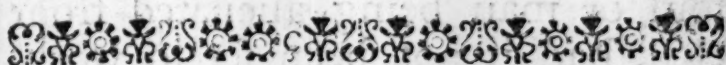
clothing? Let not us think it enough to profess, but let us make it our business to adorn our profession, and the doctrine of Christ. Let us not only please God, but labour to come up to that of the spouse; of which Christ saith, "Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse, thou hast ravished my heart with one of the chains about thy neck."

The P O E M.

*How naked lies man in his tent,
When all these creatures must be spent
To cover him! The sheep be shorn,
And cotton from the plant be torn;
The hemp, and flax be sown, and springs,
And die, and rot; The silk worm brings
Her contribution too, and all
Too short to cover Adam's fall.
The Lamb of God must also die;
His fleece our covering must be.
How doth the whole creation pay
Their homage to us every day!
Oh! Do we pay our homage thus,
To him that made both them and us?
Shall sheep, and worms, and plants be free
To serve their end, and shall not we?
While thus they are in bondage to (Rom. 8. 21.)
Our frailty, let them not be so
Unto our lusts; let them alone
Serving our lawful uses groan.
Mean while, how bounteous is he,*

Who

*Who satisfies necessity,
And frailty too! Who thus doth please
Us both for needs, and also ease!
For ornament and honour, all
But what the scripture sin doth call!
Lord let me never narrowed be
In heart, for such a God as thee.*



C H A P. III.

*The weaver either buyeth his Silk raw,
his Wool, his Cotton, Hair, Hemp,
Flax; or buyeth his Yarn, or Threed
made of all or any of these; Some of
which he scoureth, he mixeth his Col-
ours, sorteth his Yarns, then he fitteth
it on to his Beam.*

The M E D I T A T I O N S.

Sect. 1. **T**HE weaver is like to
virtuous woman, who
eateth not the bread of idleness, Prov. 31.
27. His hands are not idle: And
therefore his house in probability
will not drop through, Eccl. 10. 18.
In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat
thy bread; perhaps we mis-call it when
we call it, *The first curse.* The earth
H indeed

indeed was cursed for man's sake, *Gen. 3. 17.* But whether man in his lapsed estate was cursed or blessed, by having a law of labour laid upon him. I much question; had it been a most certain curse; for the lapsed soul of man being alienated from God, had it not been set to work, would doubtless have worse employed it self. If I would set a man into the road to hell, I would (as many (ah woful!) parents) breed him up to have nothing to do. Our weavers soul hath no leasure to rest, he is always buying, or scouring, or sorting, or mixing, or preparing his loom, or working in it. Possibly men may despise it as a low employment, but certainly better than drinking, and gaming, and working iniquity with greediness: He is not at leasure to be among the simple ones, nor doth his employment direct him to the *youth that are without understanding*; and if *Solomon's* virtuous woman was not degraded, but described by her laying her hand to the spindle, and holding the distaff, *Prov. 31.*

19. I understand not what blot the beam, and the shuttle, and the treadles, make in the weavers scutcheon.

Sect. 2. Let us go out with the weaver to his market, we find him there buying his materials, wool, yarn, silk, &c. according to his particular occupation. Buy he must, raw, or wrought; for he that cannot make an *hair of his own head white or black*, can much less make a hair either on his own head, or on the *sheep or Camels back*. It were certainly more easie to make a quality than a substance. Creation is all God's work, he can make the sheep to bring forth wool, the goats and camels skins to send forth hairs; Man cannot make one hair, not one small threed of silk. What a pitiful thing vain proud man is in power, that cannot give a being to the least thing in nature! Hath he, think we, a power to make *all things become new*, that cannot make one new? Can he make the new creature by his own power, that is not able to create the most minute

creature? can he make himself, a robe of righteousness, wherein to stand before God, that cannot give a being to a lock of wool? Surely as to a state of righteousness, or any habits of grace, he must also, before he can work any thing which will be acceptable in God's sight, go to him who hath himself rung the market-bell; *Isaiah 55. 2. Come buy, and eat---without money and without price. Rev. 3. 18. I counsel thee to buy of me---white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and all this without money and price.*

Sect. 3. How cheap is the grace of God that bringeth salvation! Without money and without price, (so runs the proclamation) it is the gift of the HOLY GHOST: And the apostle hath taught us, that nothing of that nature can be bought with Simon-Magus his money. It were ill called a gift, if it must be purchased; I cannot buy a pack of wool, nor a bail of filk, nor a little hemp, or flax, or hair, without money but I may buy Christ, his grace, his glory without money, and without price. There is no going to the market without

without money, but I may go to Christ, I may have heaven without parting with any thing, unless what is better parted with than kept. I find by experience, that my materials for my trade are bought too dear; I work them out and lose by it, I labour for nothing, and spend my money, and my strength in vain: But did ever any say he had *served God in vain*, and *waited upon him for nothing*? Christ will exchange his grace for my lusts, his glory for my vile affections: Surely the dear price of my ware should enhance the study of heaven, and heavenly things in my soul. If wares in the market be dear, it is my comfort, I can have heaven better cheap.

Sect. 4. But what need so many words to a bargain? In so much chaffering is there no sinning? *Solomon* thought otherwise, *Prov. 10. 19.* *In a multitude of words there wanteth not sin; but he that refraineth is wise.* 'Tis true possibly here are no *God-damn-meas*, (we are amongst tradesmen) no swearing, no cursing, but such a flood

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flood of words is not without a mixture of dirt: Is there no lying, no idle words, of which we must give an account also? What need the buyer say, *It is nought, it is nought*, and when he is gone away he boasteth? *Prov. 20. 14.* Two words we say must go to a bargain, but what need more? *This is my price, beneath which I will not sell: This I will give and no more*, were certainly words enough to dispatch the greatest contract; nothing but corruption hath brought in more. *Cannot you afford it cheaper? Indeed I cannot, I will have so much if I sell it, &c.* are words so like those of *Ananias and Sapphira, Acts 5.* that I cannot but tremble for that tradesman that thinks himself necessitated to use them, and presently at liberty to recede from them. When the wares are in their hand, *are they not their own?* May they not sell and keep them as they please? Are they obliged to tell their customer what they cost them? What need is there of a liethen, but to make good that of *Solomon, that the getting of riches by a ly-*
ing

ing tongue, is a vanity tossed to and fro by those that seek death? Prov. 21. 6.

Sect. 5. Ah! What need we have to pray for pardon of our sins of inadvertency, and also to advert better upon our ways? We can easily understand the sin of them who spend their precious time at taverns and ale-houses; but who thinks himself a sinner while he is busie with his yarnman, or other chapman? Yet who liveth, and thus sinneth not? Who asks himself at night, have I saved or gained nothing this day by a lying tongue? Have I spoke no evil words in making my bargains? A man may trade, as well as drink himself to hell: Lying will bring one into the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, as well as swearing and cursing. Damnees challenge God a little more boldly, and will one day understand they have not challenged an idol, but a just and living God: But the lier merits sufficiently ill at God's hand; and, if others have the preference to the devil's right hand, these will not miss the curse to be pronounced

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ced to those who shall be found at God's left hand. What need hath the tradesman to say, *I will look to my ways, that I offend not with my tongue?* Psalms 39. 1. The tongue of man hath in it a world of iniquity; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Jam. 3. 6, 8.

Sect. 6. Our tradesmen at last (after a great many words) hath bought his bargain, he brings it home; but it is not yet ready for his loom. His yarn is greasy; and must be scoured, his wool dirty, and mixed, and must be kembered; the threeds are too small, and must be twisted. The colour it may be pleaseth not, and it must be dyed, either in the wool, yarn, or piece. It may be his yarn is of several sorts, and it must be sorted, or his piece to be several colours, they must accordingly be mixed and disposed. What a work is here! What an exercise of his head and hands! And all to get 5, 10, or 20 shillings, possibly to get nothing; yet he doth it patiently, he scours, he wrings it out, he trudgeth with it to
the

the dyer, to the twister; he labour-
eth in the night and day, yet the
poor racket he hath in his eye ex-
ceeds not ordinarily what I have
mentioned, *Quantum est in rebus inane!*
I have read some where of a noble
person, who coming to an untimely
death, said, "If I had served my God
' with that faithfulness with which
' I have served my prince, I had not
' come to this end." May not many
a poor weaver say when he comes
to die, if I had served God, if I had
look'd after the concern of my im-
mortal soul with half that diligence
I attended my trade, I had not been
now uncertain what shall become of
it, I had not laboured for the wind
as I have done in my trade many a
year.

Sect. 7. Whiles the kember of wool
is kembering, and weaver is scouring
his yarn, methinks, he should reflect
upon his own best and most perfect
actions. We are sometimes in scrip-
ture compared to sheep; our fleeces
are our good works, our yarn is the
threed of our actions, some of which

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are

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are all naught; but the best must be scoured. We had need to wash them with the tears of true repentance and godly sorrow, there is a grease in the best of all our duties, a filthiness in our cleanest services; *We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness is but a filthy rag.* Isa. 64. 6. As there are some sheep whose wool is so foul and coarse, that it is good for little, and some spinsters who work so ill and foully, that their yarn is good for nothing; so there are thousands, and ten thousands in the world, whose actions are wholly naught, but none so good, that they are perfectly good, *Bonum ex causis integris.* Hence our Saviour directs us when we have done all we can, to say we are unprofitable servants. The weaver often scoureth the yarn he buys, but he is as careful to scour the yarn which he himself maketh? 'Tis not indeed what must clothe him in the day of judgment; *That I may be found in him,* (saith the Apostle) *not having my own righteousness:* But of this must garment be made, without

out which in that day *he will ~~walk~~ naked, and men will see his shame.* Ah! How useful might some thoughts of this nature be to our weaver at his scouring work? I am here scouring the yarn I buy, but have I scoured the the yarn I have made, have I been humbled for that corruption which hath clave to all my actions, this work or this day.

Sect. 8. While I see the weaver carry his yarns to the dyer, methinks, I cannot but again reflect upon the finest threads of human actions, which must be dyed too in the *blood of Christ*, before God will look upon them. Some of our weavers pieces will be acceptable in the native colour of the wool, but it is not so with the best of our duties and actions. God hath said to us, *Bring your brother Benjamin, or see my face no more;* we can only offer up *spiritual sacrifices acceptable in the beloved.* 1 Pet. 2. 5. Though our sacrifices be spiritual, yet they are not acceptable in the beloved. We have not only need of an advocate with the Father if we sin,
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but also if we pray, the reason is, because we cannot pray without sinning. There is but one dye for all our rags, all our web must be dipt in the blood of the Lamb. *Rev. 7. 14. They have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb;* and if you observe it, they *were those that had come out of great tribulation.* One would have thought that if any actions that we had done, could merit, or might appear as they come from us before the just God, what we do in testimony for the truth and name of Christ might; but if you observe, these were they whom St. *John* saw, having *washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.* Nothing passeth for a garment in heaven, but who hath Christ's seal, nothing for coin, but what hath his stamp.

Sect. 9. But I observe the weaver carrying his silk, and his yarns to the twisters, they bring several threds into one. Methinks, I cannot but reflect, what twisting there must be too in the Christians trade,

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1st, There must be a twisting in every good and spiritual action; 1. A true principal. 2. A right manner of performance. 3, A true end must be all twisted together, or the action is but *splendidum peccatum*, as *Augustine* was wont to call the moral actions of heathens. The end must be the glory of God, the principle must be love to God, for the manner it must be done in faith. Where these three are twisted together, the action is truly good and spiritual. 2^{dly}, There must be a twisting of good actions too. It is not enough to begin well, but we must go on well, and end well; *Connectere ultima primis*, make our first and last things agree, twist an holy old age with an holy youth. *If a man forsaketh his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, is righteousness shall never be remembered.* If any soul draweth back, God will have no pleasure in him, he draweth back at his own peril, and to his own destruction. He that hath twisted God's glory, love to God, and faith in God as to every action, and thus twisted the
actions

actions of his life from the time he begins to set out for God, will make himself a strong cord (like *Solomon's* triple cord) of hope, which will not be easily broken. *Lastly*, What is twisting, but an uniting of several threads into one, and is done for strength? *We being many* (saith the apostle) *are one bread and one body*. One body; there's a twisting of souls, and all yarns will twist, or may twist at least. There are indeed some heterogeneous things of another kind, will never twist with them. We are all but as the Lord's yarn made of his fleece, who was *led as a sheep to the slaughter*, died in his blood. He intends us all for one body; why should not we also twist together both in truth and love, thinking the same things. speaking the same things? However being *kindly affectioned one to another in love*. Alas! That we must have a mill to force us together, that the violence of a persecution must do that which the love of Christ in us cannot do. We are silly sheep that will not run together till the shepherd's

herd's dog be after us. Surely there is more in a joint union with Christ to unite us, (would our silly passions let us see it) than there can be in twenty little particular sentiments to divide us.

Sect. 10. The weaver must also sort his yarns, and if his stuff be to be of divers colours, he must sort his colours before he be fit to work. All yarn will not make the same kind of stuff, all will not make the warp, nor the woof, of the same stuff. Every threed of yarn is yarn, but yet not of the same sort, nor degree of fineness. Every christian action hath or should have a tendency towards righteousness, it should be levelled at God's glory, and have the other ingredients to every action which shall please God; but yet there is a great deal of difference in a Christian's actions. His actions are either natural, such as *eating and drinking, &c.* Or moral, such as are his buying, his selling, his working in his trade: or religious, such as his *reading the word, hearing, praying, &c.* By the
two

two first God is glorified, when we regulate them according to his will; and it is our duty to propose God's glory, as well, as the serving of our own natures in the doing of them, which should be a law upon us to regulate our measures by the divine standard. But our religious actions are our fine threeds. From the other God hath a secondary glory, from these he hath a primary glory; they first terminate in God, as they are an homage to him. These must be sorted by every judicious Christian. 'Tis true, there must be an eye of religion (as we call it) in all our actions, short praying, ejaculations, become a Christian in all his moral and civil actions, but our solemn religious duties must not be woven with our natural and moral actions. He makes mad prayers, that never thinks of them but in drinking healths, and he serves God wofully slightly, that never reads a chapter, or hears one read, but when his hand is employed in some worldly business, which probably hath more of his heart attending

attending that, than his ear hath, which heareth the word of God. *There is a time for all things*, (saith Solomon) but he who can find it no otherwise than thus, indeed finds a time for nothing.

Seet. 11. The weaver mixeth his colours too (when he hath a piece to make of several colours) to the best advantage for beauty. *Party-coloured garments* were an old fashion. 2 Sam. 13. 18. Gen. 37. 3. Now where such a web is to be made, the colours must be rightly ordered, mixed, and disposed one in relation to another. The Christian's active righteousness is also a garment of divers colours, his duty made up of various duties; and he never makes his web true or beautiful, if he doth not rightly dispose his duties of several colours, *giving to God the things that are God's, and to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's*; rightly ordering himself in his or her duty to husband, wife, servants, master, parents, children, political rulers; or to God, if he doth not mix his prayers with praises, his

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reading

reading with hearing the word preached, and all with receiving the Lord's supper. That's the true Christian that rightly disposeth his duties of the several colours, so as there is a due proportion of all, and a comely mixture of them all.

Sect. 12. The weaver hath his warp and his woof; his warp is the foundation, the woof is superinduced by the shuttle. Now to make his piece well, 'tis necessary the warp be first laid, and be sound and good, and the woof must bear a proportion to it too. Men skilled in the affairs of the world will tell us, that the more

* homogeneous they both * of the
be, the stronger the web same kind.
is. They say webs of

silks and yarn mixed, are not so strong as those wholly of either. Be that as it will, a Christian must have his warp and his woof too. His warp must be a knowledge of the truths of God; His woof action upon that knowledge. *That the soul be without knowledge is not good, saith Solomon, Prov. 19. 2. How can they believe in him*

him of whom they have not heard. Rom. 10. As soon can a weaver make a piece of stuff without a warp, as a Christian live an holy life, without a skill in the principles of faith; yea, and it must be a sound knowlege too: He must be skilled in the form of sound words, else he buildeth without a foundation, or upon one that is false. I know God in the methods of his converting providence, begins two ways, working sometimes from the heart to the head, first affecting the soul, which being inflamed with a love to God, by and by looks to know the ways of God more perfectly: Sometimes God works from the head to the heart, reflecting pieces of our knowledge upon our consciences; but both ways what I say is true. A course and series of good and spiritual actions must be directed by a knowing head, and an head replenished with a sound knowledge in spiritual propositions. I know that hay and stubble may be heaped upon a good foundation; and where it is so the apostle hath told us the work

will suffer loss, and the workman, if he be saved, will be saved as through fire; but it will be hard to make a good building where the foundation is but hay and stubble. Nor will our spiritual web be strong if there be not a proportion betwixt the warp of knowledge and woof of action; where knowledge is not sanctified and experimental, the action will bear a proportion to it, and not be truly spiritual. But where the soul is filled with knowledge, and that of a spiritual sanctified nature, being turned into faith, and the action is truly spiritual in its principal end, as to the manner of the performance, there is the true piece of righteousness, there the warp and woof are both of the same kind: That work, and that alone will be accepted, and receive the crown-seal of *well done good and faithful servant.*

POEM

The P O E M.

*Best trade! which gives least time to sin,
Which souls can least be idle in.*

*(Metals, with which we nothing do,
Soon rust; so souls when idle too.)*

*The weaver hath his market, where
He buys, and often pays too dear:*

*For a good penniworth he pays
His soul; in needless yeas and nays,
With which his heart doth not agree.*

*He thinks he puts a fallacy
Upon his chapman, and doth cheat
Himself, whiles for a little meat
Which perisheth, integrity*

*Is changed for hypocrisie.
Vain man hath parted with his hope,
His soul's sheet-anchor for a rope,
And that of sand; for hope doth break,
When truth in heart man doth not speak
Unto his neighbour, or doth ill;*

*Who doth such things, and hopeth still,
To the holy hill to come, builds on
No promise's foundation.*

*What need so many words, when few
We confess best, because most true?*

*What if my chapman will do so,
Must I serve his corruption too?
Who grudgeth scolds the final word?*

*Religious souls cannot afford
Giving another quid pro quo,
When doing it will souls undoe.*

*But do I think the market dear?
Grace-market is not so, for there
I, without price, buy better ware:*

(Psal. 15.)

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Yet (like ill husbands) will not spare
My time and strength for that, to buy,
At a cheap rate, eternity.

Let me dear markets (Lord!) improve,
To raise the price of thy great love
Within my heart, to hast apace
To the better market of thy grace;
Which clotheth naked souls for nought,
But what to nakedness them brought.

Help me my $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{works} \\ \text{yarns} \end{array} \right\}$ to scour with brine

Of penitential; tears not mine,
But of thy gift too. Let thy blood
Then dye them, (blessed Jesus!) these
Foul tears will not cleanse them of grease.

Let true end, principles be twin'd
With a right manner, holy mind:
Let my first and last actions be
Twisted in like sincerity.

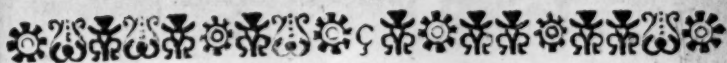
Thus let me live, and still walk on
Twined in saints communion;
Sorting my actions, so that all
May in their proper order fall:
Ordering their colours, so as I
A Christian life may beautify.

Lord! give me a right warp. Teach me
What thy truths, what thy statutes be.

Lord! Let me never build upon
What is not thy foundation:

And help me too as to my woof,
Or I shall never make good stuff.

Thus when my piece comes off my loom,
I praising thee shall bring it home
My God shall have it all, and he
For ever shall my master be.



C H A P. IV.

The Art.

The Yarn being thus prepared, the Weaver fastneth the Warp unto his Beam, and divideth it; his filling Boys prepare the Yarn for the Woof, winding it on Quils or Pieces of Reed, which he afterwards puts into his Shuttle, in order to his Work.

The M E D I T A T I O N S.

Sect. 1. **A** Christian's web is his holy life, made up of the many threads of righteous actions, the warp of which we have before found to be the *doctrine of truth*. This too must be fastned about the beam of the loom. 'Tis not enough to have truth in our Bible and books, and a notion of it in our heads, it must be fastned to our souls, (which is always done by faith) we must be rooted, and grounded in faith,

faith, as well as in love. Propositions of truth are many times but probationers to the soul, and never admitted into its fellowship. A man may know that proposition of truth from which yet he withholds his assent: As men may *detain the truth in unrighteousness*, not living up to their principles, so they may retain the truth in unbelief, not fixedly and steadily agreeing to those notions of truth they have heard and learned. Knowing is one thing, agreeing to the truth of what we know is another; yea, agreement is one thing, and a steady, fixed agreeing to it is another: So that a Christian will strive earnestly, and contend for it as another thing. The faith many Christi-

Tusc. quest. ians is described by an
lib. 1. heathen, (*Tully* I mean)

Nescio quomodo dum lego assentior, cum posuio librum et mecum ipse de immortalitate animorum sæpe cogitare, assensio omnis illa elabitur. When they read the holy scripture, when they hear the messengers of God interpreting them, comparing scripture with scrip-

scripture, and from strength of reason confirming propositions in them, they cannot but agree the things to be truth; but as soon as the books is out of their hand, and the sound of the preacher's word is out of their ears, they begin to doubt whether any thing be truth which they have read or heard: And indeed no better is the assent of any, who, by the mighty working of the spirit of God, have not faith wrought in them; hence it is that their faith is neither fruitful by love and good works, nor steady in itself. There is no need at all, that (to secure holiness of life) men should bring it into the description of faith; and so make an innovation in divinity, which always, according to the scripture, distinguisheth faith and love; for holiness (which is love in the fruit) is a necessary consequent of true faith, either respecting the proposition of the word, or the *person of the Mediator*. Can he be thought indeed to believe that *arsenick* is poison, who yet freely takes it into his belly? Or can any be judged to

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trust

trust in a friend for a kindness, who hath promised it, but upon the condition of some performance which he refuseth to do? It is I say from this, that the propositions of truth are not fastned in the soul, that men walk not according to the light of them, Eph. 4. 14. And that *they are tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the slight of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.* Every breath of wind would disturb the weaver, and every idle hand would trouble him if his warp were not fastned to his loom. Every wind of doctrine, and every ignorant idle seducer disturbeth that soul's profession of truth who hath not the propositions thereof by faith fastned unto his soul.

Sect. 2. The weaver divideth his warp, that it may serve several intendments. The deliberate Christian divideth the propositions of truth of which his soul is possessed. Some refer to speculation; some more immediately to practice; some inform him what God is, what Christ is,

is, what he hath done and suffered, what the holy Spirit is, what heaven and hell are, &c. Others more immediately refer to practice, informing the soul, what it ought to be both towards God and to wards men; these precepts concern him as a magistrate; this concerneth him as a minister; these things concern him as a father, these as a child; these propositions contain the will of God concerning him as an husband; these concern the woman as a wife; these concern him as a master; the other as a subject. or as a servant. And this is necessary, that he may be *holy in all manner of conversation*; For holiness is a lovely spotless fruit, that grows up from the *revealed will of God* concerning us, as the root: And as this root sends forth many branches, so the fruit of holiness must be seen in every bough, in every relation and circumstance of his life.

- *Sect. 3. The filling boys prepare the yarn for the weaver, by winding it upon several reeds and quilts, which being filled, he reacheth to the weaver sitting in his*
L 2 *loom,*

loom, and ready to go to work. We suppose our spiritual weaver fixed in his loom, ready to say with *David*, *My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed*, resolved to walk with God in all the duties of holiness, having said with *David*, *Psal. 119. 57. Thou art my portion, O Lord, I have said, that I will keep thy words.* We suppose him also to have wound his warp about his loom, to be not only possessed of a due notion of divine truths, but to have his heart rooted and grounded in them, giving a fixed and steady assent unto them; and now every relation, every neighbour, every new providence, every action of his life becomes as a filling boy to him, affording him a matter to work upon, reaching him a quill or reed to work with. The subject gives the magistrate an opportunity to work the work of God, by executing justice and judgment without respect of persons, knowing, that he *judgeth not for himself but for the Lord, &c.* The magistrate doth the same for the subject, giving him an opportunity to fulfil
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the will of God by *honouring the king, and being subject to the higher powers, because ordained of God.* The wife gives the husband advantage for his spiritual web of righteousness, by *loving her as Christ loved his church. 1 Peter 3. 7.* By walking before her as *a man of wisdom and knowledge. Eph. 5. 25 Colos. 3. 19. 1 Pet. 3. 1.* And the husband requites his wife by giving her the like advantage to shew her self obedient to the commands of her Father which is in heaven, by reverencing her husband, endeavouring to win him by her conversation, by loving him, and being subject unto him as her own husband. *Titus 2. 4, 5. 1 Peter 3. 1. Ephes. 5. 22, 23. &c.* Is he that sitteth in this spiritual loom a father? How easily may he see every child he hath about him, with one of these pipes or quills in his hand, offering him for his work of righteousness, an opportunity to be obedient unto God, in bringing him or her up in the *nurture and admonition of the Lord, and not provoking it to wrath?* Eph. 6. 4. in minding it of
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its covenant in baptism made with God; in teaching it or them *the statutes of the Lord diligently, when he sitteth in the house, when he walketh by the way, when he lieth down, and when he riseth up, according to the law of the Lord, Deut. 6. 7.* Is he a child? He may see his parents mutually serving him in his spiritual work; giving him advantage to please God, *by obeying his parents in the Lord, for this is right. Ephes. 6. 1.* Is he a master? He may see his servants thus serving him, with such opportunities, *to give unto them that which is just and equal, knowing that they also have a Master which is in heaven; and if he be a servant, his master gratifies him with the like opportunity of obedience unto God, while he obeyeth in all things his master, according to the flesh; not with eye-service as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart fearing God, doing whatsoever he doth heartily, as to the Lord knowing, that of the Lord he shall receive the reward of the inheritance; for he serveth the Lord Christ. Col. 3. 22. 23. With good will, doing service as unto the*

the Lord, not to men. Eph. 6. 7. Not answering again, not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things, Titus 2. 10. Being subject with all fear, not only to the gentle, but to the froward. 1 Pet. 2. 18. The like may be said of all relations, yea every providence of God, every natural and civil action of human life, supplies the spiritual weaver with pipes to do his work by.

Sect. 4. The weaver puts the pipes, or quills (which the boys have filled with yarn for him) into his shuttle, (the hollow of his shuttle) in order to his work. My son, saith Solomon, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee, &c. Prov. 2. 1. Why should not the hollow of the shuttle put me in mind of the secret places of my heart, where the spiritual weaver too must fasten every pipe that he makes use of, to compleat his web of righteousness. It is not for nothing that we have in holy writ, the man according to God's own heart, so often saying
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ing, *I will meditate on thy works*, and in *thy word*, *Psal.* 119. 78. and 48. 23. and 15. 148. *Psal.* 77. 12. He that never meditateth about his duty, with respect to every providence, every relation, is never like to do it. The weaver that intends to work, puts ever pipe into the hollow of his shuttle, and makes it fast there; whofo intendeth the performance of his spiritual work must go and do likewise. When the providence of God gives him a new relation, he must be meditating what now is the will of God concerning me, what is my duty towards this wife, this child, this servant; and the sense of this duty must be upon his heart. Meditation is the soul's stand upon its object. The will of God, in every circumstance of his life, must not only be received in his understanding, but hid in his memory, engraven upon his heart and affections, set continually before his eyes: He will otherwise weave his spiritual web, no better than the weaver could weave his cloth, or piece of stuff

stuff, without a pipe in his shuttle. Oh! How many are there that neglect this! They have a duty to do in every circumstance of their lives, a duty toward their relations, a duty with respect to God's providence as it is diversified to them; but either they know it not, being ignorant of the scriptures, or they remember it not, or they love it not, the pipe is not in the shuttle, they can make no work; their life is indeed a life of action, they are throwing the shuttle all the day long, people of busie heads and hands; but their time is spent as *Seneca* complained, either in doing nothing, or in sinning, which is a doing what is worse than nothing, or doing other things, which signifie nothing either to God's glory, or their eternal happiness; or in doing things which, though materially good, are formally evil, *bonum non bene*, good things spoiled in the doing; and all this for want of putting the pipes in the shuttle, understanding the will of God concerning them under these or these circumstances,

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then hiding it in their hearts, and setting it before them as the rule of their lives and conversations.

Sect. 5. Once more, methinks I cannot but observe, *how the wisdom of divine providence hath made work for all the children of men*, that as there was no beggar in *Israel*, so there need be no beggars in *England*. How many doth a single weaver imploy of all, both sexes and sizes! It must be an adult man must weave, but women must spin for him, and children must fill his pipes. It is the reproach of *England* that there are so many beggars in the streets thereof; when God hath furnished it with one little beast, whose profit, if improved, would set them all to work, and afford them bread in the sweat of their face. That we are full of scandalous beggars, is not because the providence of God hath not laid out work enough, or the trading of *England* is so little, that it will not set them to it; nor because the legislative power hath not provided sufficient laws; but because they are so ill
executed

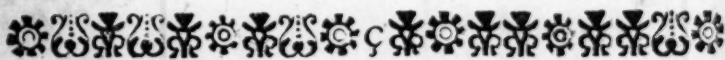
executed by inferior officers, and parents are suffered to bring up their children in idleness. O *England!* Spit out thy flegm, shake off thy sloth, honour God in the substance and increase which he hath given thee. It is nothing but lust and sloth that fills thee with such prodigious wickedness and beggary.

The P O E M.

*What this poor child at my command,
Doth reaching pipes fill'd to my hand,
Which I first in my shuttle hide,
Then weave my web, and am supplied
With new ones by and by, until
I my intended task fulfil.
That every providence divine,
That every period of time,
Each new relation, actions all
Within my sphere, what-ere doth fall,
Doth to my soul, still offering me
Renewed opportunity,
To weave my web of righteousness,
That men see not my nakedness.
Lord give me in my heart to hide
Thy will, and make it there t'abide.
Thy will concerning me in all
Periods of life, and things that fall
Unto my shame. Each circumstance
May make me with thy help t'advance
In holiness. Teach me t'improve*

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*All pipes, whether of frowns or love,
 Watching advantages to do
 The whole of what thou call'st me to.
 And whiles thy providence O God,
 Bringeth me pipes, thy staff, thy rod,
 All fill them for me; Let them be
 Accepted, and wrought out for thee.
 I stay not (Lord! for pipes) O may
 My busie soul make no delay
 In work: Work-party coloured,
 With here a child's, their father's threed,
 Here let an husband's duty run,
 And there a master's threed well spun;
 All knit together by the band
 Of love to thee and thy command:
 That when my weaving time is gone,
 My Lord may say to me, Well done.
 Beyond my task I can do nought,
 Let that but to an end be brought;
 Which cannot be without thy skill,
 Altho' thy self my pipes dost fill.*



C H A P. V.

The Art.

*The Weaver being thus prepared for his
 Work, setteth himself to it, swiftly
 throwing his Shuttle with one Hand,
 which he catcheth with the other, not
 without some Motion and Employment of
 his*

his whole Body. The Shuttle leaving a Threed (at every Cast of it) betwixt the divided Parts of the Warp; which he uniteth to the other woven Threeds by the continual Motion of his Sle. In the mean time his Feet are moving the Traddles, which raising the Havel, do part the Warp, and are continually making a new Room for the Shuttle. In the mean Time a pair of Temples spread upon the Web, keep it fixed and extended, advantaging the Weaver in his Work. Some webs are of that Breadth, that a single person cannot work them, in such cases two Weavers are employed each at the Extremities of the Loom. catching and returning the shuttle which his Partner throws.

The M E D I T A T I O N S.

Sect. 1. **O**UR spiritual weaver is the good Christian, his fastning his warp to his beam is the rooting of his soul in faith. To him every diversified providence supplies the place of a filling boy, offering him matter to work with and upon, in making his web of holiness. We have

have seen him set in his loom, fixed to his work, resolved to *have respect to all God's commandments*. Now how quick doth he throw his shuttle from one hand to another? This is that which the scripture calls a running after God. *Draw me* (saith the spouse) *and we will run after thee*, Cant. 1. 4. *I will run the ways of thy commandments*, saith the man according to God's own heart) Psal. 119. 32. The weaver works early and late, from four in the morning till eight at night. The good Christian also *preventeth the morning watches*, Psal. 119. 118. and *meditates of God in the night watches*, Psalm 63. 6. He awaketh early in the morning, and early seeketh God, Psal. 57. 8. and 63. 1. and 108. 2. Isa. 26 9. He is throwing his shuttle, working the work of God all the day long, *Evening and morning, and at noon he prays, and crys aloud*. Psalm 55. 17.

Sect. 2. "The shuttle moveth
 ' swiftly, and thus also run the days
 ' of the weaver's life: My days (saith
 ' Job) are swifter than a weaver's
 ' shuttle," as swift as the shuttle will
 run.

run. The weaver thinks himself concerned to be at his loom betimes, that his task may be done by night. Because the Christian's days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, he is highly concerned to be up betimes, 'remembring his Creator in the days 'of his youth." Eccles. 12. 1. And, as he hath need in the morning to be throwing his shuttle, so in the evening his hand must not be slack; not only because he will else not finish his course, but because the spiritual work is of that nature, that as a piece of cloth or stuff not finished is fit for no use but will all ravel out; 'so if a righteous man forsake his 'righteousness and commit iniquity 'his righteousness shall never be 'remembred, but he shall die in the 'iniquity which he hath committed." A Christian's work is like rolling a stone up an hill, from which, if the hand ceaseth till it be lodged on the top, it certainly falls back to the bottom, and he that hath laboured about it, hath done just nothing but only tired himself to no purpose,
nor

nor shall reap any thing but his labour for his pains.

Sect. 3. The whole of our weaver is employ'd in his work. His head contrives it, his eyes observe the motions of the shuttle, and the several parts of the loom, that they be regular, and serving his intendant. One hand throws the shuttle, the other catcheth it, in the mean time his feet are not idle, they are at work upon the treddles moving them. Without these various operations of the several members of his body, our weaver could never dispatch his work in any desirable, or acceptable manner; nor hath the law of the Lord left our spiritual weaver, one limb or member of his body idle as to his spiritual work: His head is employed in meditation, and contrivances for God; his eyes are lifted up unto the Lord, from whom come all his mercies; his hands must work the work of righteousness; with his feet he walks with God. Every bodily member hath its office to a spiritual work, as well as that
which

which is natural. God made every member, and not a member but for himself. Every member in man's body hath a natural operation, for which it is necessary. In our civil employments we both can and do use them successively; there's none there useless amongst them. And shall we think that there is any of them of no use to our spiritual work? Shall I with both my hands work on my trade, and have never an hand at work for God? How busie am I at my work with hands and feet, and head, and all my body? Was I ever so wholly employed in the work of God, though the wages be highly more. The fruit of this work will be but a few shillings at the end of the week; but the work of righteousness will be peace, and quietness, and assurance forever. To what purpose are my knees, and hands, and eyes, and tongue at work in prayer, if presently my hands be working iniquity? In the web of righteousness every member hath its office. It is the fruit of the soul's

N

sanctification

sanctification in the body, and mind, and spirit. God must be served with all and every part and faculty, with all our heart, and soul, and strength.

Sect. 4. The shuttle every time it passeth from hand to hand, leaveth a threed behind it, good or bad; thus doth every action of a Christian's life. All his actions make but one web, according to the goodness or badness of which he must have his reward. Every particular action is a threed in this web, and so hath an influence upon the weaver's praise or dispraise, and upon his wages at last: So that as the weaver may say upon every cast of his shuttle, now my work is nearer an end than it was before I threw my shuttle; so a Christian, upon every action may say, By this action I am nearer heaven or hell, I have either added a jewel more to my crown, or a coal more to the fire I must endure. The shuttle passeth not up and down for nothing. All our thoughts, words, and actions are of an abiding nature; thousands of them slip our memory, but none of

of them escape the book of the divine omniscience. *In thy book, saith David, Psalm 139. 16. all my members are written; and again, Thou tellest my wanderings, put my tears in thy bottle, are they not in thy book?* It is as true concerning all our actions, *are thy not in God's books?* We do them, and God keeps silence some time, *Psalm 50. 21.* but he will let us know that he seeth them, and *will set them in order before our eyes.* Every action makes a part of our web; we must receive our eternal reward, *according to what we have done in the flesh.* Man hath an imperfect eye: A master may overlook many an ill threed in a piece of stuff; but the eye of God is acute and perfect, nothing slippeth that, *he will set all in order before our eyes.* The weaver's knowledge, that his shuttle leaves, every time he throws it, something towards his web, makes him diligent to see it be rightly ordered, and makes him careful and wary how he throws it. The spiritual weaver understanding that every action of his life will contribute to

his web, ought to keep a watch upon his heart, his tongue, his hands, his whole man, to look before he throws his shuttle, ay, and long back upon it too, when he hath thrown it; For a Christian works more for eternity, than *Appelles* painted for it.

Sect. 5. “ A threed (*through the weakness of it*) will break sometimes, do the weaver what he can: The weaver lays the ends together or knits a knot to unite the threeds again, then it passeth, provided it be not done too often.” *Iniquities* (saith *David*) *prevail against me*: Let the spiritual weaver do what he can, his threed will sometimes break, his course of righteousness through corruption will be interrupted. *The good which I would, I do not*, Rom. 7. 19, 23. *I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin*: The spiritual weaver hath nothing in this case to do, but by repentance again to lay his ends together, to make his former righteous

teous actions agree with the latter, to knit the knot of a renewed covenant with God, and a new resolution to keep the Lord's statutes. This being done, though the failures are seen by the eye of him *who seeth all things*, yet the web passeth upon the covenant of grace, for which we may give God *thanks for our Lord Jesus Christ*: For we have not an high-priest which cannot forgive infirmities, the apostle tells us, *He can have compassion upon the ignorant, and upon them that are out of the way*, Heb. 5. 2.

Sec7. 6. "The weaver must have
' his temples, which lying upon the
' web, keep it fixed and extended,
' he would otherwise never work to
' any purpose." What the pair of temples is to the weaver, those noble graces fear, and faith, and love are to the Christian. These spiritual habits dwelling in every gracious heart influence all his actions, and keep his web fixed and steady; he walks in the fear of the Lord all the day long; he lives in the prospect of

a promise, yea of many promises made to them *who hold out to the end*; he acteth not out of constraint, but willingly, from a principle of love. The hypocrite wanting these habits of grace works with no fixedness, but at great uncertainties; these habits keep the web of righteousness extended, and the spiritual soul fixed; his *heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord*, saith the Psalmist. *Do this and live for I fear God* (saith Joseph:) And again in the case of his mistress, *How shall I do this great evil and sin against God!* The sameness and immutability of God in his nature and will, who is the object of the souls faith and fear, makes him the same in all times; it keeps his soul fixed, and to the same extent and dimensions of spiritual duty, his eye is always upon him that his invisible. Oh what lamentable work doth the hypocrite make in his spiritual loom for want of these spiritual temples! At what uncertainties doth he throw his shuttle? He is fixed and steady in nothing; one thing to day, and
another

another thing to morrow; his sails are set according to the wind of his interest, which, according to the varieties of this world, one while blows from the north, another while in the quite opposite quarter. Whereas the sincere, good, spiritual workman keeping his temples before him, works evenly, steadily, fixedly; he sets God before his eyes always as his fear. thence it is, that his feet do not slide; he is always eyeing the promise, so is ever labouring to fulfill the condition, and daily fearing, and taking heed, lest having a promise of entering into rest, he should fail through unbelief, these temples move every day with him and in him, he carries them along with his work, till his web of righteousness be wholly done.

Sect. 7. Lastly, I observe there are some pieces of stuff and cloth, which a single person cannot work alone; two sit at the loom, the one receiveth the shuttle which the other throws, and returns it to the hand from which it came. The spiritual weaver

ver hath some such webs too, he
 hath relative as well as personal
 duties. The husband throws his
 shuttle to his wife, walking before
 her as a man of wisdom and know-
 ledge, loving her, and honouring
 her, as the weaker vessel. She re-
 turneth it back to him again, obey-
 ing her own husband, submitting her-
 self to him; he must love his wife as
 Christ loves his church, and she takes
 care to reverence her husband; both
 are at work together as meet helps
 one to another in the things of God,
 and in the things of the world, and
 this is acceptable in the sight of God.
 What rare hangings for an house do
 such a pair of weavers make! How
 much more excellent than those of
 gilded leather and tapestry! The
 father throws the spiritual shuttle to
 the child, *bringing him up in the nurture
 and admonition of the Lord*, teaching
 him the way in his or her youth,
 which he shall not forget when he is
 old. The children return it to the
 father or mother, obeying them as
 it is right in the Lord; honouring
 them

them not merely from a natural right, but because it is *the first commandment of God with a promise annexed to it.* The master throws his shuttle to his servant, commanding him and all within his gates, to *remember to keep holy the sabbath-day*, whetting the law of the Lord upon them, when they lye down and when they rise up, when they go out and when they come in, giving unto his servants *that which is just and equal.* The servant again returns it to his master, being obedient to him that is his master *according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as unto Christ, not with eye-service as a man-pleaser, but as a servant of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with good will doing service as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doth, the same he shall receive from the Lord, whether he be bond or free.* Ephes. 6. 5, 6, 7. Not answering again, not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. Titus 2. 9, 10. So in political and

ecclesiastical relations, the pious magistrate throws the shuttle to his subjects ruling them in the fear of the Lord, commanding the ministers of the gospel in his dominions to fulfil their office; commanding all his subjects to keep the law of the Lord, forbidding all deceitful weights and ballances, not regarding faces in judgment, not oppressing the poor and fatherless, but regarding the cries of them, and of the widows. The subject again returns the shuttle to the magistrate, being subject to the higher powers, *knowing there is no power but is ordained of God, being subject not only for wrath but for conscience sake; for this cause paying tribute also, because they are God's ministers, rendering to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour.* The minister of the gospel throws his shuttle to his people; preaching the word of God in season and out of season, with all faithfulness, diligence, boldness; in meekness instructing those who oppose

‘ oppose themselves; flying also
‘ youthful lusts, being vigilant,
‘ sober, of good behaviour, given to
‘ hospitality, apt to teach, not given
‘ to wine, no striker, not greedy of
‘ filthy lucre, patient, no brawler,
‘ not covetous, &c. On the other
‘ side, their people return the shuttle
‘ being obedient in the Lord to those
‘ who have the spiritual oversight of
‘ them; laying apart all filthiness,
‘ and superfluity of naughtiness, and
‘ with meekness receiving the en-
‘ grafted word, which is able to save
‘ their souls, being doers of the word
‘ and not hearers only.” Oh! What
rare and beautiful webs of righteouf-
ness are made at these double looms,
when they thus work according to
the divine rule? Happy is the people
that is in such case; Men shall cer-
tainly say, This people have the Lord
for their God.

The P O E M.

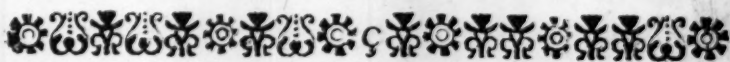
*How swiftly doth my shuttle fly
To th’other hand, and by and by
Returns to th’other hand it first did throw,*

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Stops not at all, nor yet moves slow;
 But as it moves a threed doth stay,
 To be united by the flay
 Unto the web! All our days here
 Swifter than weavers shuttles are,
 (Saith holy Job) souls cannot rest
 Idle at all, but work what's best,
 Or worst. They cannot move, but some
 New actions flays upon the loom,
 Adding still to their web, and must
 At last be judg'd just or unjust,
 According to them all when done;
 So will the judge's sentence run
 For life or death. The whole must be
 Judged by the all seeing eye.
 What care had I of thoughts need take,
 Of words, of actions! All these make
 My web; as it is true, or not;
 So will the wages I have got
 Be unto me at last. Then watch,
 My drousy soul! Let not sleep catch
 Thine eyes: Let nothing thee betray
 To what in the great judgment-day
 Will not abide. My head, my hand,
 Mine eyes, my feet, move at command
 Of my quick soul: Each act their part,
 While I am in my weaver's art.
 The head contrives, the hand doth cast
 The shuttle, feet do move as fast.
 All is at work, the nimble eye
 Observeth how the shuttles fly:
 Should I not thus work righteousness
 With my whole man? Is that work less
 In labour, or in price? Then shake
 Thy self my soul: Let each power take
 Its part: command the members too

That

*That each of them their part may do :
Think not God will be served by
A pious tongue, or devout eye ;
Nor by a false pretending heart,
He must have all, and every part.
Doth a threed break, doth thy soul sin,
Do what it can ? O ! Look back then,
And by repentance make that good,
Which nothing but thy Saviour's blood
Can expiate ; repentance may
Pardon obtain, but no scores pay.
My soul, see that thy temples be
Always before thy face. O see
Thou work'st from faith, love, holy fear ;
These will thee keep, thou shalt not err :
Thy work will streight and even be,
Nor shalt thou move uncertainly.
My soul ! Learn how to work alone,
And how with a companion.
Who doth not work of every kind,
Himself will not approved find.*



C H A P. V.

The Art.

*The Weaver in weaving sometimes finds a
Threed defective in the Warp, mostly
through the Negligence, or other In-
firmity of him that wound the Warp
on, he not discerning the Breach of the
threed.*

Threed. Sometimes also a Threed breaketh in the striking; if it happeneth in the former, the Weaver supplieth it by another Threed in its Room; if it breaketh in the striking, he brings the two Ends together, and goeth on in his Work. When he hath wrought a Plate, then he looks it over, with an Instrument picks it out, and brusheth of the loose Knots: So goes on till he hath finished his Web; then he cuts it off the Loom.

The M E D I T A T I O N S.

Sect. 1. **T**HE spiritual weavers warp is his *credenda*, the several propositions of faith and truth, which are wound upon his soul, partly by the exercise of his reason upon natural principles, partly upon the revealed will of God in his word: For the candle of the Lord in our souls is lighted both these ways. Reason working upon natural principles will conclude, that there is a God who made heaven and earth, that he must be eternal, infinite, just and holy, &c. That to him must be given account of our thoughts,

thoughts, words and actions: That man hath an immortal soul, &c. But there are many more propositions of truth, which reason (working from mere natural principles) will never discover; yet are concluded from reason upon this *hypothesis*, that those sacred books, which we call the scriptures, contain the revealed will of God, and are the words of him who cannot lye. Now as natural light is not the same in all, but varieth according to the capacity of a man to exercise his reason, and the helps he hath for it; so also there is a vast difference in mens conclusions from scripture-principles. Every man is not alike able to search the scriptures, nor hath the like advantage from foreign help; nor is so able as another to compare spiritual things with spiritual. There is not a greater difference in faces, than there is in the sentiments and opinions of pious souls, who all have set up to themselves the same end, viz. The glory of God, who daily beg of God to lead them into all truth, and

and would not willingly believe a lye; and necessarily it must be so, unless it would please God, that all men should be born with the same wit, reason, parts, and arrive to the same degrees of learning, and have the same helps of instruction. Now it is impossible, that the two contradictory parts of the same proposition should be true. Hence, of necessity every spiritual weaver will at last be found to have some threeds in his warp defective; some indeed more, some less, but all some. *Nemo sine crimine vivit; optimus ille qui minimis urgetur*, saith *Horace*. There is none liveth who hath a right apprehension of every divine truth: And this reflection, were but men possess'd with common humanity, would oblige them to bear each with his brother. *There will not be found a guiltless person to throw the first stone at his neighbour*; neither is any man infallible; nor is there upon earth any infallible judge; why do I then judge and condemn my brother? May not he by the same right condemn me? Is there

not

not the same distance from him to me (stand where he will) as from me to him? Who shall judge betwixt us? Shall the church or any authority of men terminate betwixt us? The church indeed, yea the civil magistrate, may determine, that nothing be published within their territories, contrary to what they apprehend the will of God: But certainly no man can make an hair of truth's head white or black: truth will be truth, and error a lie when men have said what they can; nor is any particular church more infallible than a pope. My following a multitude in an error will no more excuse me, than the *following of a multitude to do evil*. I have no judge under heaven as to my practice above my conscience. It is indeed my duty to hear the church reverently, to examine what it saith diligently, and to believe it, as my conscience tells me, it doth, or doth not agree with the holy scriptures. Our spiritual weaver then may be assured, that there are several threeds defective in

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his

his warp: And therefore stands highly concerned to be ever and anon casting an eye upon it, examining the various propositions which he hath embraced for truth, and upon which he buildeth and directs his practice. But it is very possible, that he may not be able to put in better threads when he hath done. He is a brute no man, that can believe what he listeth, or whatsoever his neighbour would have him to believe. All a Christian's duty in this case is, 1. To examine and prove propositions, to hear on both sides, to compare things spiritual with spiritual, &c. 2. To have the persuasions to himself, in which he hath faith different from the church in which he lives, 3. To beg of God to lead him into all truth, and to reveal what as yet is not revealed to him, and to pardon his mistakes, and not to conceal any truth revealed to him in unrighteousness: Which doing, he may be assured *we have an high priest can have compassion on our infirmities, upon those that are ignorant, as well as those otherwise*

wise out of the way. Yet I fear some errors of faith are damnable, such as infer an impossibility of the soul that is possessed of them, to do those things which the scripture makes necessary to Salvation, faith and repentance; whether any other or no, is more than I know.

Seet. 2. The weaver finds many a threed break in the striking, yet is his web not spoiled by it; but when it happens, he stops, looks back, and re-unites his threeds, and goeth on in his work: Thus doing, tho' there be many a real breach, yet the piece comes off, is approved merchantable and passeth. We have before considered all the thoughts, words and actions of a Christian's life, as our spiritual weaver's striking. Infinite are the threeds that break in it. The righteous sinneth seven times in a day; who can tell how oft he offendeth? He who thinks he can keep the whole law of God in thought, word and deed, is not more to be blamed for his error, than for his ignorance; if he knew what holi-

ness that holy rule requireth, he would never say so. It was because the *Pharisees* did not know, that God's law which saith, *Thou shalt not kill*, forbade as well rash anger, and ill words, as bloody actions, that they thought they could fulfil it: And if the Popish doctors did not give a jejune interpretation of a divine law no way concordant to holy writ, they would never tell us of a possibility of works of supererogation, or that any hath oil enough in his lamp for himself and others, which was what the wise virgins in the parable denied. Our threads (the Lord pardon them) will break, and do break every day. What help in this case, but cast our eyes back upon our actions, to take care *ut ultima respondeant primis*, to bring the ends together again by repentance, to make up the breach by an exercise of faith on the Lord Jesus; to resolve in God's strength to take more heed for the future: This doing, though what is done cannot be undone, yet, for the satisfaction of Christ, it shall be reckoned

ed as undone, and our web of righteousness accounted as perfect, and accepted of God. The soul is not made one who never sinned, (that is impossible, and importeth a contradiction) but it is made as one that had never sinned, that is, its sins shall never hurt it.

Seet. 3. The weaver when he has wrought a plate (so they call so much of the web made, as can at once be before his eye) he looks it over, picks it, brusheth off the loose knots; (so I think they call the little parts of wool or yarn picked off) how fitly doth this prompt the spiritual weaver to his every day work of self-examination? Every days thoughts, words, actions make him a plate of work. Some unevenness there will be in it, his conscience spiritually enlightened is the instrument he must use to pick his work by. Something will be found too much in his affections, passions, words, pretences, &c. even in his best actions, to be pick'd out by a penitent heart, disclaimed, abhorred, cast from him
as

as a filthy rag; something to be brushed off as no part of his spiritual web, yea as a noisome fly, which will make his whole box of precious ointment to stink. He never proves a good workman, who is not as good and as diligent at picking, as at throwing of his shuttle. He never makes a good Christian, who is not as good at examining his ways, as walking in a seeming course of piety and righteousness. Often reckoning we say makes long friends: Often reckoning with God and our own conscience, will keep God and us long friends, and our own consciences long friends unto us. Oh that every good Christian would remember at the end of every day, my day's work is now done, but still I have it to pick; and then retire into his closet, and use his conscience to reflect upon his actions, and see if it be (so far as his light will guide him) according to the divine rule: How much would this contribute to the evenness of a Christian's web, and help him in the close of his life

to

to say after *Hezekiah*, Lord, remember how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart.

Sect. 4. This whole work must be done till our piece comes quite off the loom. Self-examination, repentance, watchfulness, are not the works of a day, or a month, or a year, but of our whole life; no work for lent, or ember-weeks, or fasting-days only, but the work of every day, every week: The good Christian can never find a time for a *carnival*. Travellers tell us, That in the popish countries, particularly at *Venice*, the week before their mortifying time of lent is called by that name, a week given up to all manner of lust, luxury, gaming, lewdness and profaneness, as a preface to their mock-fast that is to follow, which make their lent-en-weeks an undue proportion of time, for the disgorging their polluted souls of the proceeding *crapula*. These are spiritual weavers, that spoil more of their work in one week, than they can again make good in many. The workman in the Lord's work,

work, who needs not be ashamed, is quite another thing; he is always at work, either weaving or picking, either working or looking over, searching or proving what he hath done, whether it be good or well done, yea or no till his piece comes off the loom: his hands and eyes never cease: And to him that doth thus, God will say, *Well done! Good and faithful servant, enter unto thy master's joy.* The weaver cuts his own piece from the loom, and ceaseth to work when he hath made his piece to the length and breadth, which he or his master hath proposed. The good Christian might do so too, if his lengths and breadths proposed by his great Lord, were not such as he can never reach and fulfil; but his mark to which he is to *press forward, the perfect man, the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ*, mentioned, *Ephesians 4. 13.* is such a length and breadth as the best Christian can never hope to reach, and must therefore die in his work; still forgetting what is behind, still pressing forward

ward to what is before. He cannot take off his work when he pleaseth, because he will never have done it; he cannot finish his course till God hath finished his life. The work which God hath given him to do, is not to depart from his statutes all the days of his life.

The P O E M.

*Do some threads sail in every warp?
Why do I at my neighbour carp,
Because he is not of my faith,
Nor can I think true what he saith?
Who made my soul judge in his case,
What but my own impudent face?
Don't I from him differ as much
As he from me? Is the case such
The church must judge? But yet I shall
To my own master stand, or fall.
The church shall judge what shall be taught
Within her territories naught.
I must not publish then what she
Doth contradict, and not agree:
But shall not still my thoughts be free
From any human tyranny?
Shall she determine me to do
What conscience saith will bring me woe?
Must we subscribe what our hearts tell
Us, will but lead us into hell?
Or, can we believe what we list?
And must we, or our neighbour's fist*

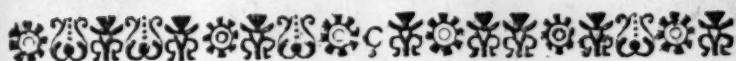
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*Into it buffet us? Where's gone
The protestant discretion?
Rome hath the best of't, if that we
Must have infallibility.
Whoso believes, because the church
Believes, is in the Romish lurch:
He for's religion ne're will burn,
And waits for the next wind to turn.
May I mistake? What shall secure
Me, coming to the church's lure?
God will forgive me, if I slide
Under the conduct of that guide
Which he hath in me set; and in
Foundation-doctrines do not sin.
Though in my warp some threads amiss,
Or in my woof infirmities.
If I do what I can upon
My conscience information,
For what I have, or have not done,
I trust Christ's satisfaction.
Only I must both brush, and pick
Each plate of work, for't will be sick
Of imperfection: And this I
Must every day do till I die.
When God my work cuts off the loom,
Then will my private judgment come;
And I shall have my wages given,
Which must be either hell or heaven.*

C H A P.



C H A P. VII.

The Art.

When the Weaver's Piece, or Cloth is off the Loom, he brings it to his Master, who payeth him according to what he hath earned, to some more to some less. His Master maketh it up, fitteth it for the Merchant, by several Acts, according to the Nature of the Web, Fulling, Entring, Raising, Pressing them; some are only plainly made up and pressed; some are Glossed: some must be carried to the sealing Hall and Sealed. Thus they are fitted up for a Merchant, then sold.

The M E D I T A T I O N S.

Sect. 1. WHAT a work is here, before the poor laborious weaver can get a few pence or shillings! What a variety of labours and pains! I have heard, as I said before, That a great peer of this

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realm

realm sometimes condemned to die, thus exprest himself; *If I had served my God with the same faithfulness as I have served my prince, I had not come to this untimely end.*" Many a poor weaver that sits at his loom, from four in the morning till 8, 9, 10 at night, but to get 7, 8, or 10 shillings a week for a livelihood, I fear may sadly reflect upon his soul, and say, If I wrought half so hard for God, as I here toil for my master, how much better wages should I have? What a lamentable fool I am to work 9, 10 hours in a day, for 7, or 8, or 10 shillings, and to grudge one or two hours, to work for a crown of glory; to read, hear, pray that God would not condemn my soul to an eternal misery? How doth many a poor industrious weaver spend his labour for that which is not bread, and his strength for that which either will not profit, or not comparably with the work of righteousness. Blessed God! What comparison is there betwixt thine and the world's wages, to him that most faithfully serves it; his

his crowns of gold, and this crown of eternal glory and happiness? We hear men often say, We will rather play for nothing; than work for nothing; yet how do the most of men rather chuse to work for nothing, yea to work for hell, rather than to work out their own salvation, and for the glory of God? (The greatest some things of this world, and of that which is to come.) The service of God is a perfect freedom a freedom, in comparison of all the work in the world. Doth God require of a poor weaver, that he might be saved, to spend 8 or 10 hours every day in reading, praying, hearing, self-examination, &c. What lively active Christian is constant to much more than a third part of that time spent in devotion to God? Yet it is for an eternity of glory and happiness. It is true, he must *set God always before his eyes*, that will not slide by his feet. He must walk *in the fear of the Lord all the day long*, that will *enter into his master's joy*, he must continually direct his intention right, whether he *eateth or drinketh, or*
what-

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whatever he doth, he must do all to the glory of God: But is holiness such a toil, such a weariness to the flesh, such a bodily labour as weaving is? Yet what a difference is there in the wages? Ah! What a slave is man, that can tie himself, yea must tie himself to a loom all the day for a poor livelihood, and yet cannot tie himself to a course of religion and holiness, to obtain the promises both for this life, and for that which is to come? Shall not the beams of the weaver's loom, shall not his shuttles and treddles be witnesses against him another day, which by him are kept in continual motion, and worn out, for a little portion of bread? While in the mean time, not a cushion is worn out by him in prayer, not a bible with reading in it what should concern his everlasting peace. What but *an evil heart of unbelief* could give conduct to the life of most, while forsaking the fountain of living waters, they thus spend their time, their precious time, (upon which their eternity depends) in digging up to them-

themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, that will hold no water? Did they believe there were a God, there were an heaven, such a reward as the scripture speaks for the righteous, it were impossible they should move so little for it, while they work so hard for what is infinitely beneath it.

Seet. 2. The weaver's master pays him according to his work. The materials he hath before received from his master, of various sorts, and prices, according to the piece he is to work. Some spoil all, and have, instead of wages, nothing but a smart reproof and chiding, or an action brought against them; others bring it home slovenly done; others bring it done well, and workman like. They are paid according to their work. The great Master, the Lord of heaven and earth, furnisheth every man with materials and instruments, for him to do the work which he hath given him to do. None is without a reasonable soul, endued with several faculties, the principles
and

and instruments of all human operations. All indeed have not alike wit, capacity, judgment, reason; but all have some materials, some powers, given to them. God (as the prudent weaver) doth not at first give out to all the best materials. The prudent weaver first tries his servant with coarser yarn, then with finer; first with woollen, then with silk: If he works not the coarser first well, his master trusts him not with the finer: If he works not his woollen yarn well, his master will not adventure silk into his hands. If he doth work the coarser well, his master is not bound, (otherwise than he may be by a promise or covenant) to trust him with his most choise and costly materials. I must confess I do much incline to think, that in the day of judgment, no soul shall be condemned for not doing that which it had not wherewithal to do: As a man may sin without the law, so he may perish without the law, being judged without the law. I can easily acquit the holy God of any unrighteousness,

teousness, if, in man's lapsed estate, he should eternally condemn a soul, for not doing what in his present state he cannot do. 'Tis certain, that we all had in *Adam* a power to do whatsoever in innocency God required of man, in order to salvation; if our fore-father spent what we should have lived upon, it were very absurd to say, God hath lost his right to exact his debt, because we have lost our power to pay it: But I say, I see no need to insist on this. God will find enough to condemn sinners for at last, because they have done it, (when he forbade them) and it was in their power to have forborn it; or not done what he commanded, and was in their power to have done. The meritorious cause of their damnation (to whom God pleaseth not to give efficacious grace) will be found, their abuse, or not use of their common grace. It is true, did men use their common grace never so well, they could not, by such use of it, earn special grace, (that is a sacred wind, which bloweth where it listeth)

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the price of it is above all the pearl, and coral, and rubies, and diamonds of a natural man's work: But I do not think that in the day of judgment we shall see the face of one soul, who did what in him lay, only God was wanting to him in the dispensations of effectual grace. The sinner (let him think what he will to the contrary) shall never lay his damnation at God's door. This great master will give every one according to his work. Some shall arise to shame and contempt, some to life eternal; all shall receive according to what they have done in the flesh, whether it be good or evil. The latter shall go into *everlasting punishment, the righteous into life eternal.* Matthew 25. 46. When Christ comes (and it will be quickly) *his reward will be with him, to give every man according as his work shall be.* Revel. 22. 12. *When the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his Angels, then shall he reward every man according to his works.* Matth. 16. 27. He whose work hath been to rise up early

early to drink strong drink, and to sit at the wine till it inflameth him, shall have according to his work, his portion, where he shall want a cup of cold water to cool his tongue. Other sensual sinners shall also have according to their work, *i. e.* the judgment threatned in the word of God to such kind of works: And the child of God also shall have according to his work, *Isaiah 32. 17. The Work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of it quietness, and assurance for ever.* The good man shall receive according to his work. *The king shall say to them on his right hand, come you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom, &c. For I was an hungry, and you gave me meat, &c.*

Sect. 3. As every christian's work is not alike, so neither will his wages be. *1 Cor. 3. 15. If any man's work be burnt, he shall suffer loss, but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire.* He that buildeth upon the true foundation shall be saved; but yet he may so work, that much of his work, may be burnt, and if it be

so, he shall suffer loss, he shall be saved, but as through fire. It hath been a question amongst divines, whether there shall be *degrees of glory in heaven, yea or no?* 'Tis very probable there shall, much scripture looketh that way; certain it is, that in many things all the glorified saints shall be equal. They shall all be exempted from eternal punishment, they shall all see God, they all shall be for ever with the Lord, but that they shall all sit on equal thrones, and have the same degrees of glory and happiness, we cannot say; nor yet will describe wherein the difference shall lie, what further degrees of honour or pleasure one shall have more than another. This we know, that every spiritual weaver shall, in the great day, be paid according to the kind of his work, and according to the degree of his work in its kind, be it good or evil, It shall be more tolerable for *Tyre and Sidon, for Sodom and Gomorrah*, than for *Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum*. Those that abide with
Christ

Christ in his temptations, shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Sect. 4. Only there will be these differences betwixt the earthly and the spiritual weaver's payment, 1. The earthly weaver hath something due to him from the nature of his work as well as from his master's promise and contract; so hath not the spiritual weaver. *The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life.* A man may earn hell, but he must have heaven freely given him of God; all this pretence of debt we have, is from a free promise. 2. Again, The earthly weaver may do something beyond his task, which if he doth, he shall be paid for it: So cannot the spiritual weaver, nay, when he hath done all he can, he must say he is an unprofitable servant, so as what he hath done comes short of his duty. So that indeed our spiritual weaver strictly hath not according to his work, not according to the failures, and imperfections of it, but according to the kind of
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it, and degrees of goodness in it. The spiritual weaver's reward is by no means a *quid pro quo*, a proportionable reward unto his work; but 'tis a reward of grace, according to the nature and degree of his sincerity in his work.

Sect. 5. When the weaver's piece cometh off the loom, (according to the nature of the piece) it is either by the master only made up and pressed and sealed, or else (as some pieces require) it is dyed, fulled, tentered, raised, pressed, glozed, and so exposed to the merchant. Much of this is only to deceive, or please the buyer's eye: Nothing of this is to be done to the spiritual web, that goes to an eye, which, as it cannot be deceived, so it will not be pleased with any glozings; only *dyed it must be, made up and offered unto God it must be, sealed it must be.* The only dye that can give an acceptable tincture to the work of righteousness is, in the fountain set open to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin, and for uncleanness,

ness. Revel. 7. 14. *Those that came out of great tribulation, washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the LAMB. If we sin (saith the apostle) and who lives, who works and sinneth not? we have an advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the righteous.* 1 John 2. 1. It is Christ that with his blood, and perfect satisfaction must dye all our works; it is he who must make them up perfect through his righteousness; 'tis he that must set his seal of acceptance upon them, who must offer them up unto his Father. This is what saint John saw, Revel. 8. 3. when he saw another angel standing before the altar, having a golden censer: *And there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar, which was before the throne. Verse 4, And the smoke of the incense which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.* Thus now hath our spiritual weaver finished his work, run the race which God set him to run,

run, finished his course, and enters the paradise of God.

Sect. 6. But I observe, That every poor weaver cannot stay for his wages until the end of the year, but hath it from week to week; possibly they cannot stay so long, but must have it from day to day. The good master indulgeth him, considering his necessities, and the needs of his family, he giveth him not all, but some he giveth him: So doth our great Lord and master; godliness hath promise *both of this life and also of that which is to come.* Our Lord knoweth, that we are necessitous creatures, and cannot do him service (while we are in the body) without food and raiment. Godliness hath therefore many promises annexed to it, which are fulfilled in this life; if not to all in the extent of some promises, yet to all so far as shall be food convenient, and so enough for them, to support, uphold, and maintain them, while in this world they are at their Lord's work. Yet not this in equal portions; but as many masters

masters that have various workmen not indued all with alike discretion, sometimes trust one (who is the discreetest of them) with the portions belonging to three or four; 'tis all in trust, that they should distribute to six and also to seven: So doth our great Lord and master, in his distributions of the good things of this life, which are capable to be ill as well, as well used. God gives to some abundance, to others enough, to other stool little. He that hath abundance, hath with it a charge *to be rich in good works, to do good, and to distribute.* God hath provided for all, some have it in their own hands, others have it in their friends hands. God puts for the poor into the hand of the rich, and with a charge to them to do good and to distribute it according to his order, and under, and by the rules he hath set down in his word. Their great wages are to be paid at the end of their days, indeed at the end of the world; but they shall in the mean time have something to support, and uphold them

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while

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while they are in the flesh, doing
and suffering the will of God con-
cerning them.

The P O E M.

*Lord! How we labour for a piece of bread,
Which when we have,
It perisbeth! No sooner are we fed,
Our stomachs crave.
We work, and by and by our getting spend:
what we before
Were, that we are; Our labour's without end;
And we still poor,
Still but our body's fed. Our better self
will starved be:
It cannot be maintain'd with worldly pelf
t'eternity.
Is there no better trade, might not I work
for better pay,
If I serv'd God? My soul let it not irk
thee for to pray,
To read, to hear, to spend time every day,
to make that sure,
Which when all these poor things shall melt away,
shall still endure.
Work how I will, while I am in the flesh,
my pay will be
Or good, or bad; of either more or less,
eternally.
Why dost thou say no mortal man can live
merely on prayer?
Did ever God unto his servant give
nothing but air?
Can'st trust him for a crown, and can'st not trust*

him

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him for thy bread?

*Hath he not said unto thy part of dust,
It shall be fed?*

*Did ever any him for nothing serve,
For nothing here?*

*If thou dost not abound, thou shalt not starve,
thou needst not fear.*

*But do not think, that thou dost from thy maker
earn the least good:*

*All's free gift, or because thou art partaker
of thy Lord's blood.*

*His hand must seal, his blood must dye the piece;
If he but write*

*Accepted, it shall pass for righteousness;
that makes it right.*

*Out of that angel's hand, my God, let all
my prayers come*

*To thee, and whatsoever good I shall
Work in my loom.*



T H E

Art of Weaving Spiritualized.

P A R T. II.

C H A P. I.

Of the Excellency of the Trade.

O B S E R V A T I O N S.

H^Itherto I have only helped our weaver with some hints for spiritual meditations, and discourse from the the several parts of his work. Let me now give him some few observations I have made upon eight and twenty year converse with many of this occupation. My observations will some of them be more general, relating to other trades as well as that; some more special, relating to that employment. I shall
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not be curious in distinguishing them each from other, but take them as my thoughts suggest them to me.

1. In the first place, I observe the circumstances of that occupation, equally fitted to the personal advantages of those which are employed in it, and the political good of the place where it is exercised, with any other, if not much exceeding most employments: Which I shall make out in several particulars.

1. Its end and effect, is the supply of one of the great wants of human life. Food and raiment, are our two great bodily needs: The apostle adviseth, that, *if we have them, we should be content.* The weaver supplies the latter. What sad employments have many persons in the world, the end of which is nothing else but luxury and the satisfaction of lusts: Their trades are but a factorage for the devil, a meer provision for the *sinful flesh, for the fulfilling the lusts thereof.* Blessed God! If mens consciences were not seared with an hot iron, upon what an uneasy

easy pillow would they lye down at night when their consciences should tell them, now I have been doing nothing this day, but serving mens lusts, and helping them on to their eternal ruin and destruction. How many are thus employed? The weaver as to this may sleep secure; and work securely in the day-time, being asured, that he may comfortably abide in the calling to which God hath called him; he may confidently beg God's blessing upon his employment, and say, *Prosper thou the work of our hands upon us, O Lord, prosper thou our handy work.* He whose employment lieth in a meer service of pride, luxury and wantonness cannot do so.

2. A second advantage of this trade is, The little time that it giveth either servant or master (but servants especially) for idleness. Idleness (especially in youth) is the source and fountain of almost all the debauchery polluteth the world, and all the beggary with which we abound, *Solomon* tells us, *Ecclesiasticus* 10 18.

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By much slothfulness the building decayeth, and through idleness of the hands the building drops through. This (saith Ezekiel 16. 49.) was the iniquity of Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her daughters. The soul of man is an active busy thing, and must be set on work; if it be not kept in a constant good employment, it will most certainly employ itself ill, and undoubtedly the debauchery of most places owes it self to the great leisure that servants have in shops, &c. The weaver can find no time to be idle in a blessed employment which keeps the soul out of the temptations to which idleness exposeth it. Idle persons, 1 Timothy 5. 13. are not idle only, but tattlers, and busie-bodies, wandring from house to house, and speaking things which they ought not: Yea, and doing things too which they ought not. It is the idle person that proves the gamester, the drunkard, &c. It is true there may be an excess in labour, when it is to that degree that it wasteth the body, destroyeth the health, allows
not

not due time for devotion, nor the reasonable repairs of the body, by food or sleep, or moderate recreation; but (these things excepted) the lesser time for idleness any trade allows, the better it is. This I am sure this trade doth. I am many times ashamed of my own bed, when I see the candles in the poor weavers chambers or hear the noises of their looms.

3. Thirdly, It is the advantage of this above many other trades, that a man may be dealing in it with a little stock, and from it get a little livelihood. It is the disadvantage of many other employments, that nothing can be done in them without several hundreds of pounds going: 'Tis otherwise in this, my self have known many who came to considerable estates, who have told me they begun with ten pound; they passed but with a staff over *Jordan*, and at their coming back had great droves.

4. Fourthly, If God blasts the weaver in his course of trade, yet (provided he hath his health and limbs)

limbs) his trade affords him a livelihood. Many trades do not this, they are more open, &c. And if the tradesman fails, he is forced to fly.

5. Fifthly, If God bleſſeth the weaver in his trade, he is fitted by it alſo in a great meaſure for the more noble employment of a merchant; He hath learned to know the true making and the prices of moſt ſtuffs, how they may be afforded, &c.

6. Sixthly, It gives a great advantage for ſome exerciſes of religion to be interwoven with ſecular employment. It is the great unhappineſs of ſome employments, that they ſo wholly take up the head and heart of ſuch as are engaged in them, that they hardly allow any intervals for any ſpiritual employment. The weaver is not ſo; but his trade is very conſiſtent with, 1. heavenly ejaculation: He may have *manum in textrino, oculos in cælo*; his employment will not hinder his devout ſoul from many a look toward heaven; he may weave and pray. 2. Spirit-

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ual meditations: If not so continued and fixed, as if wholly at leifure; yet frequent, and ferious. My fenfe of this hath given me the occafion of helping him in the former part of this difcourfe. 3. Spiritual difcourfe. Ordinarily three or four are working here together in the fame chamber: If but one of them will be the preacher, the others are tyed to be the hearers: and indeed I have often thought (how truly I cannot tell) that this trade this way hath very much contributed to the religion of this town, God having a great number of that occupation among us, of whom we have reason to hope very well, as to their eternal ftate.

7. Seventhly, It is a trade of great ingenuity: No mechanick trade (if this may be called fo) giving fuch an advantage to ingenious perfons to improve their fancy, by the invention of new patterns, or mixing yarn and colours too for a new pattern laid before them.

8. Laftly, It is a trade infinitely ufeul as to the poor. Females both
woman

woman and children are employed in preparing their yarn: Children from their infancy almost, in winding their pipes, men in weaving at the loom. In short, I cannot tell whether there be any one other employment, that affords so many personal advantages to the tradesman, or political advantages to the state under whose government they are employed. *Solomon* saith, *the king is served by the field*: I am sure the king of *England* is eminently served by the weaver: and this is obvious to any one who doth but consider, what an innumerable company of spinsters, wool-combers, filling-boys, shear-men, dyers, pressers, &c. depend upon them: Besides, the merchant by them is served with infinite variety of stuffs, to be transported into all the hotter parts of the world, besides the great quantities used in our land, and the king's adjacent dominions.

1. This observation may be of a double use to the weaver. 1. To *restrain his discontent for the course of life*, in which the providence of God, the

prudence of his parents or governors, and his own choice in his younger years, have engaged him. It is a great infirmity of our natures, that not one of many is content with his portion. The poet long since complained of it:

*--- Qui fit, mecenas, ut nemo quam sibi
sortem, seu ratio dederit, seu fors
objecerit, illa contentus vivat, laudet
diversa sequentes.*

The weaver is ready to say, O that I had been a hofier, a grocer, a draper, any thing but what I am! One great reason of which is; That we can easily see the difficulties which attend our course of life, but are not so good judges of what attend another's; which makes another's appear to us so far more desirable, when, in very deed, there is no course of life in this world, but hath its difficulties attending it, and sufficient for every trade are the evils thereof; and there is none that makes an option of another course, but if he would give himself the
leisure

leisure to enquire of some so employed, he would find them as much wishing they had been something else than what they are: But what hath the weaver to complain of? What can commend a trade which is wanting to his? The alehouse-keeper, vintner, inn-keeper, may lie down many a night with an aking heart, to think how many he hath been helping on to the bottomless pit. Others may have four reflections, when they come at night to think over what they have been doing that day, and their consciences makes them answer, that they have been serving the world with what is of no use, but to serve pride or luxury. The weaver's conscience shall never trouble him for this. When the weaver reflects upon his trade, and considers the general end of it approved by God, the profit of it, tho' not so great as others, yet what will afford food and raiment to the industrious hand, the advantages of it, whether God pleaseth in it to smile or frown upon him, the advantage

age it gives him for devout ejaculations, pious meditations, good conferences, the usefulness of it for all, more especially for the maintenance of the poor, he hath no reason to murmur at divine providence, nor to blame his parents prudence, or reflect upon his youthful indiscretion. God hath chosen a good lot for him, and he ought chearfully to abide in the calling to which God hath called him, and to be content.

2. Did I say to be content? Yea to be highly thankful unto God, blessing God that by his providence directed him to such an employ in the world, as his conscience shall never justly check him for the following of it; such a one as he can in faith go to God morning and evening, and beg God's blessing upon, so cannot many a jollier person. An employment that filleth his hand, and divers from idleness, which is the soul's rust and poison. An employment in which he hath many advantages, more than in many others, to serve his God, himself, his generation; that he shall

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shall not live in the earth like a drone, upon the honey gathered by others, nor like a beast of prey upon rapine, nor like one who thinks he is only born for himself, and whom, both the good and sober world, could a thousand times with less inconvenience miss than keep alive. Here is abundance of matter of praise, that hath overruled our wills in the indiscretion of our youth to such a choice as this, the choice of a trade at which a man may sit with so much satisfaction, and in which he may work with so much pleasure, and the exercise of so much piety, and for so much publick profit, as well as private advantage. Let then the weaver, reflecting on his employment, sit and sing.

The P O E M.

*My God! my loom's no ware-house, where
Gold-ore, or silver-wages are :
No goldsmith's shop glistening with plate,
Nor any other thing of state ;
 'Tis no such thing :
But 'tis an utensil, by which
The poor are clothed and the rich.*

What

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*What helps to cover mankind's shame,
And thence hath got itself a name,*

To serve the king.

*My work is such, as when once o're
Will ne're my conscience trouble more:
When I have wearied hands and feet,
My sleep upon it will be sweet;*

My mind at rest.

*'Tis what employs me all the day,
And spares no time with sin to play;
What tires not quiet, nor giveth leisure,
For any sordid sinful pleasure,*

And that trade's best.

*'Tis what so takes not up my mind,
But I can in it leisure find
To send a prayer, with a sigh,
Unto my Father that's on high;*

And think upon

*His works of power, and of grace,
And beg the shinings of his face:
There I can sit, and speak his praise,
And others tell how he displays*

Salvation.

*There I can tell for me what God
Hath done, both by his staff and rod;
Of my Redeemer I can sing
There, and exalt my Lord, my king,*

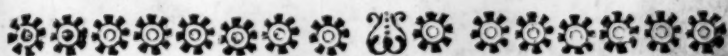
And him obey,

*In doing what he calls me to,
And which he wills me for to do.
There I can set on work the poor,
And keep them from rich dives door;*

And all men pay

*With the honest sweat of a poor brow:
There I can recompence the plow,
I find it clothing, that me bread:*

*Thus I am clad, and also fed
In a poor loom;
Whiles the all-seeing eye doth see
Others working iniquity.
My weaver's loom I will prefer
Before the idle theater,
For Christ will come.*



C H A P. II.

*For the most Part, those who begin the
least Stock, raise the best estates.*

2. O B S E R V A T I O N S.

1. **I**T is an observation which will be found to justify it self, as in many other trades and courses of life; so in this trade also. Not many who begin with large stocks, grow rich by trading; but for the most part of tradesmen are those who began with little; nor doth the reason of this ly wholly out of ordinary sight, though possibly something of it may not be so obvious.

1. What if we should say, (what the *comedian* long since observed) that the nature of all is *proclivis a labore ad*

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libidinem.

libidinem. Most persons naturally hate labour, and do not care to eat their bread (if they can help it) in the sweat of their face. If men have enough to live on, they will rather abate the ornaments of their life, than endure labour for them. While on the other side, those who at first are forced to labour, to supply the necessities of their life; by that time they have done that, are so habituated and inured to it, that labour is far more pleasant to them than idleness; and they now do that upon choice, which they before did upon force. The diligent hand makes rich.

2. But yet this is not all; for the same divine author also saith, *the blessing of G O D maketh rich*. But why? How the blessing of God more usually attends the day of small, than of great things, may be a further inquiry? For possibly a farther reason may be found out than this, that God usually annexeth his blessing to *the diligent hand*; yet always it is not thus. It was the saying of *Hierom*,

(at

(at least ordinarily ascribed to him) *Omnis dives est vel iniquus, vel iniqui heres.* Every rich man is either an unrighteous man, or the heir of some unrighteous man. It was somewhat too harsh to express it by an universal affirmative: But if he had said the major part are so, he had doubtless spoken much truth. Now, where he that beginneth with a large stock is *iniqui heres*, though not himself unrighteous, yet the heir of an estate got by unrighteousness, he is but *malæ fidei possessor* in the eyes of the just judge; and it is no wonder if he neither keeps, nor improveth what he hath. It was an old saying, *De male quæsitis vix gaudet tertius heres*, and agrees with our English saying. *Ill gotten goods will not thrive.* I knew a worthy person in this nation, to whom God had given a plentiful family of children, and no plentiful, though a competent, estate, he would ordinarily satisfy himself, discoursing with his dear and good yoke-fellow, about the circumstances of his family, when he should cease

to be; That though his estate was not great, yet it had no worm at the root. *Job* saith of the wicked man that is rich, *Job* 27. 17. *Though he heape up silver as the dust, and prepare raiment as the clay, he may prepare it, but the just shall put it on, and the innocent shall divide the silver. He buildeth his house as the moth, and as a booth that the keeper, maketh.* Now, he that beginneth with a great stock that hath been thus got, it is no great wonder if it melts away in his hands, though they be diligent hands; he begins with an estate upon which a curse is entailed.

3. Further yet, What if God will set a period to, and write a *nil ultra* upon an estate; nations, persons, and so estates too, have their periods. He that hath said to the waves, *Hither shalt thou go, and no further,* hath also said so to persons families, nations, estates, &c. It is true as to estates, as well as time and duration of life: *One generation goeth, and another cometh.* It is he who poureth contempt upon princes, and causeth them to wander

in the wilderness, where there is no way, and setteth the poor on high from affliction, and maketh him families like a flock. Psal.

107. 40, 41. Suppose the man that beginneth with a great stock, be as diligent as he who begins with a little, and as well proportioneth his expences to his heap: (which is not often seen) Suppose also no rust in his silver, and that his stock before he hath it, hath not *mala stamina vite*, a consumption in its causes, but be well gotten, and left unto him: Yet if his estate be grown up to its measure, and come to its period, it is no wonder if it improve not; it is arrived at its measure, and come up to its full growth.

2. What is obvious in worldly trades, may possibly be observed as to our spiritual trading too. Those that begin with the least stock there, ordinarily make the best improvements in grace. *Publicans and harlots enter into the kingdom of God before the Jews.* Mat. 21. 13. Oftentimes the last are first, and the first last. Men coming from the east and west, and from

from the north and south, sit down in the kingdom of God, Luke 13. 29, 31. And those near it, (in an human eye) come short of it. We shall observe two sorts of men setting up in the ways of God: Some whose former life hath been profane and sensual, who have been bred up in a great ignorance of God, and the things of God; upon some of these God worketh and maketh a change in their hearts; Others who have been bred up in the knowledge of the scriptures, instructed by their mothers and grandmothers in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. These latter may be resembled to men beginning with great stocks. Now, if you observe it, ordinarily the former make the greatest improvements in the exercise of grace. I know it is not universally true, as neither are our observations as to trade, without an exception; but generally it is so. *Paul* seemeth to be an exception from this rule; he began with a great stock, bred in the knowledge of the law, zealous in the practice of it; *Touch-*
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ing the righteousness which is of the law, blameless, Philip. 3. 6. and yet improved to a great hight, Laboured more abundantly than all the rest of the apostles: But two things are observable in his case.

1. *Those things which were gain to him, those he counted loss for Christ, Philip. 3. 7. He found himself rather disadvantaged than advantaged by his legal righteousness; I suppose, because they exposed him to a temptation of resting in them, and trusting to them, rather than in the Lord Christ and his righteousness.*

2. *Though he had a great stock of knowledge and righteousness, yet he had much empared it before his conversion; for he elsewhere telleth us, he was a persecutor, a blasphemer, so as he was now to begin again; like a tradesman that begins with a great stock, and cannot thrive, but spends it, and squanders it away, and then comes again to begin the world with nothing, and then he thrives. Our Saviour hath confirmed this*

this notion to us in his parable, Luke 7. 41. of the two debtors; both which the creditors forgave frankly, *to the one five hundred pence, to the other fifty.* Peter judged that he, to *whom most was forgiven, would love most,* and our Saviour told him, *He had rightly judged.* You shall ordinarily observe in the world these Christians, whom the Lord hath taken out of a state of sensuality and profaneness, more warm for God in all acts of devotion and piety, than those whose conversion is more insensible, and whose life hath been more like persons sanctified from the womb.

3. Nor doth the reason of this ly so deep, but the eye of human reason may pierce very far into it; for gratitude being the great principle of obedience, in reason, the greater the love is which the soul hath experienced, and the greater sense is which the soul hath of that love, the higher the obligation in point of gratitude must rise. Now, though every forgiven soul hath much forgiven; yet it cannot be denied, but
some

some have more forgiven to them than others. Sins are not equal, either for kind, or number. Now, (saith our Saviour) they who have much forgiven, will love much. But besides, the sense of this forgiveness is ordinarily upon that soul most, to whom most hath been forgiven. The change upon the heart is more evident, and the work of divine power and goodness in it more evident; and ordinarily such persons are made to cry out of the belly of hell, before the Lord hears them; they feel more wounds in their consciences, more terrors upon their spirits, which infinitely heighten the rate of forgiving mercy in such a soul, and consequently more strongly oblige them to all that duty which they owe unto God.

4. Certainly, where this observation (so far as it relates to the weaver, or to any other tradesman) is justified, it ought to lay a great obligation upon them to the service of God, and all acts of obedience, by which their gratitude may be manifested. Their

hearts should be taken up with the
 admiration of the Divine goodness;
 for they will find it easier to see the
 thing that it is so, than to under-
 stand how and why it is so. The
 freedom of Divine goodness is not
 only seen in the effluxes and in-
 fluences of divine grace bringing
 salvation but also in the different
 proportions of the morsels of bread,
 which God causeth in this life to be
 carved us. It is not every one that
 begins with a little flock that grows
 rich; though ten for one of those
 that do wax rich, raise it from a
 little. Should not the rich man that
 is made rich, look back, and say
 with *Jacob*, Gen. 32. 10. *Lord, I am*
not worthy of the least of all thy mercies,
and all the truth which thou hast shewn
unto thy servant; for with my staff have
I passed over this Jordan, and now am
I become two bands. Should not they
 say, Lord! my family was small in
 England, and little esteemed of? I
 came to town a poor boy: I had not
 10, 20, 30 *l.* to begin with; God
 made my ten pounds twenty, my
 thirty

thirty pounds so many hundreds perhaps; whiles in the time I have lived in the city, I have seen many a rich tradesman melt to nothing, run the country, die in goal; many others are as poor as I was, they are poor still, want bread for their families, I am full and rich, and have need of nothing but a more thankful heart. What hath made the difference, but only free mercy? to whom, possibly, God hath shewed severity; to me goodness. Lord, what shall I render to thee; What an obligation should this lay upon such persons, to be *rich in good works*, to do good and to distribute, to give *portion to six and also to seven*, in thankfulness to God, who hath given such a portion to them? My heart to see akes persons so scanty-handed as to piety and charity, to whom God hath been so liberal. Is it not the too ordinary course of men whom God hath thus exalted as soon as they get a little estate, to think of nothing but purchasing coats of arms for their families, adorning
X 2 their

their houses with rich household stuff, providing only great portions for their children, and looking out great matches, without regard to the religion of the persons to whom they marry them? This is the great vanity of the sons of men, (I tremble to say, such of them as I also hope grace hath made the sons of God) that when themselves have, to an old age, used nothing but a rake, to scrape together a great estate, their last ambition is, to purchase a fork for a luxurious child, or children, to scatter abroad all they have got. Oh! how doth this unthankful generation requite the liberality and bounty of a good and gracious God toward them! How ill do they requite the God of all their mercies!

5. Our wise God foresaw this vanity in the hearts of his people, and therefore cautioned his people, Deut 8. 11. *Beware, lest thou forget the Lord thy God.* Ver. 17. *And say in thy heart, my power, and might of my hand, hath gotten me this wealth.* But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God; for it is he
who

who giveth thee power to get riches. There are three or four fountains from which the riches of all men flow, *Inheritance, marriage, gift trading.* The power of God is eminently seen in them all; as to the two former they are confest in two ordinary *English* sayings: 1. *God makes heirs.* 2. *Matches are made in Heaven.* Nor do I think the unfearchable providence of God more seen in any two things in the world. For that of making heirs, a thousand instances might be given. My self knows a person of honour and great estate, betwixt whom and his estate (if I remember right) were 18 or 19: Did not God make this noble person the heir? The influence of God upon marriage is a most unaccountable thing: The heirefs or woman with a great estate, can give her self no account why she loves and chooses such a man, yet she cannot but do it, she must make him her husband, though, it may be, all her friends and neighbours wonder what she sees in him. Not many grow rich by gifts;

gifts; but they who do so, may easily see the hand of God there too: An estate is given to one a stranger, nothing a kin, only because he is of the rich testator's name; to another, out of a peculiar kindness and fancy, of which the receiver can give none, or but a very slender account. For an estate got by trading, the power of God enabling the tradesman to get riches is, if not more, yet every whit as evident. Who is it that sends more customers to one shop than to another? Who gives one a better judgment, a better correspondent, a better fancy than another? Now certainly, that God who giveth me power to get wealth, hath a reasonable right also to give me a law how to use it when I have gotten it; and it is because we see him not in the gift, but say in our heart, *Our power, our wit, and the might of our hand, hath gotten us this great wealth: Or, our heart could never be lifted up, and we forget the Lord our God.*

Lastly, This observation (certainly) should deliver us of any anxious solicitude

solicitude for the posterity we shall leave behind us, and reduce it to no more than a pious and moderate provident care for them. I have desired to make it my rule, never to be further solicitous for my children, than to give them a good education in learning arts and trades, so as if they will but use their diligent hand, by the supervening blessing of God upon them, they may have whereon to live in the world. I have had many arguments that have induced me to it. 1. I have said to my self, *Who am I who thus labour, and am so solicitous for my child?* What did I begin the world with? God hath given me enough, and to spare. It is very probable, that had I begun with two or three thousand pounds, I had been a worse man than I am. Why should I distrust God for my child, who have had so much experience of him for my self?

2. *Secondly*, I have observed, That such solicitude in parents is generally inconsistent with the performance
of

of those duties which a man oweth to God, to himself, and to his neighbour. Men cannot allow themselves decent food and raiment; they have no money to lay upon the most truly pious and charitable uses; because they must provide great estates for their children. Oh, horrible vanity! O miserable unbelief!

3. *Thirdly*, I have said to my self, *For whom do I thus scrape?* for my child, who possibly may never live to need it. The *German* story tells us of one *Babo Abenspergius* (if I remember his name right) who brought into the presence of the *Emperor*, threescore and ten Sons begotten from his own body, who lived to see them all in their graves. But if my children do live, I do not know whether they will prove wise-men or fools; frugal men, or fots; if the former, let me provide what I will, it will all be too little: if the latter, let me leave them little, if they have education, it will certainly bring forth enough, if not abundance. This very meditation checked the

the toilsome labour of the wisest man under the sun: Eccles. 2. 18. *Yea, I hated all the labour which I had taken under the sun, because I should leave it unto the man which should be after me; and (saith he) who knoweth whether he shall be a wise-man or a fool, yet shall he have rule over all my labour wherein I have laboured; and wherein I have shewed myself wise under the sun: This is also vanity.*

4. Again I have argued thus with myself; *It is the diligent hand, and the blessing of God added to it, which maketh rich.* If my child be bred up to an honest occupation or calling, and he hath God's blessing, he shall be rich, tho' he begins with but a little; how many examples do I see of it! On the other side, Let me leave my child chests of gold or silver, if the blessing of God be not with and upon him, it will all melt away like dew before the sun; if he be not provident and diligent it will come to nothing; the leaving of him a great estate to begin the world with, is ordinarily a temptation to young men

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to luxury, which will hinder them of God's blessing; or at least to laziness, as it maketh them look on themselves not so much concerned to labour. These things have overruled me into a steady resolution, so to live upon what the Lord hath given me, as not to deny myself, my wife, children, or family, what is necessary, or decent for me or them; and in my expences to abate nothing as to food or raiment but luxury. 2. Not to withhold my hand to the full proportion of my estate, either as to any use which my conscience shall tell me is either pious or charitable. For my children, to neglect nothing to their education, which may make them necessary to, or ornaments in the world; above all to breed them up in the highest degree I can, of the knowlege and *admonition of the Lord*; and without any further care to leave to my children what shall remain after all these reasonable and religious deductions. I had rather my children should not live, than live to the dishonour of God,
and

and of no further use to the world,
than to eat up the fruits of the earth.
To this I am encouraged by this ob-
servation, That usually those who
begin with least (especially upon a
previous, religious, and sober educa-
tion) thrive best in the world, and
dishonour God least in their conver-
sations.

The P O E M.

*False heart ! why say'st my children cannot live,
Unless I give
Them thousands when I die? Are there not more
Who are made poor
From great than smaller stocks? Plenty, oft doth
But prove a moth.
Heaps left by cov'tous worldling God turns o'er,
To pay their score.
The yung man's soul, while's body too high fed,
Choaks in a bed
Of lazy down : its native powers, and worth
Sleep ; not put forth
Fury gives arms : necessity gives wit,
Nor can he sit,
Who hath no bread to eat. Nor can he play ;
For whom the day
Too little is to get what he must have,
Or else a grave.
In what I have, then let my heart rejoyce :
Let not the voice
Of scraping churles out from my lips proceed :
There is no need*

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I should deny my self, or needful food,
or decent good;
That I should churlishly drive from my door
he truly poor ;
Or when God's cause requires, that I should say
I cannot pay ;
I shall to little then too children leave :
God may bereave
Me of th'm all ; they may prove such as will
My gettings still,
And me reproach I would not leave a groat
For th' drunkards throat.
If they prove good will not my God provide ?
Who e'er espied
A righteous father's righteous son in want ?
Sin may him scant,
(His own, or fathers sin ;) But if that he
Unrighteous be,
He cannot live on what I leave. God's curse
Melts a great purse.
He may have debts of mine to pay, God shall
Discharge them all
Out of my inventory. I am gone,
But my poor son
Must whatsoe're I've gotten ill restore
Unto the poor,
And other creditors. Oh ! let me be
My own Trustee.
My own executor, before I die :
Let every cry.
Against me satisfied be ; Let none
Challenge my son ;
Let me God's blessing leave him, that's enough ;
If he hath more, but one poor piece of stuff.

C H A P.



C H A P. III.

*In the Weaving Trade as well as others,
Sloth ruins, as well as Rioting and Lu-
xury.*

O B S E R V A T I O N 3.

1. **I** Observe (and this is not peculi-
ar to the weaver's trade, but
common to it with any other) that
there are two great causes of men's
ruin, Luxury is one, but Slothful-
ness is the other; and it may admit
a dispute, which of these ruineth
most. Solomon saith, *The slothful man
shall be under tribute, when the diligent
man beareth rule*, Prov. 12. 24. And a-
gain, *He that is slothful in his work, is
brother to him that is a great waster* :
their relation is from the common
tendency, and exit of them both. I
have observ'd some tradesmen never
in their shops, they are either on
horseback, hunting, or coursing, or
in inns or taverns, tippling, drink-
ing, or gaming. Over a few years
I hear

I hear of them in the goal, I see over their doors, *This shop is to be let*; their places know these fools no more. I have observed others chargeable with none of these enormities, but seldom or never in their shops, careless of their business, sleeping till noon, spending much of their time in idle discourses, or prating; soon after I have heard they also changed their habitation for a goal. Men wonder, some say such a one was never a bad husband, he scarce ever spent a penny at an alehouse. Inconsiderate men that do not attend to that of *Solomon*, That *he who is slothful in his work*, though he be not, yet he is brother to a great waster. There is a waste of time as well as silver, and the drunkard loseth much more by the loss of the time he spends at the alehouse, than of the money which he there spends. The sluggard that puts his hand in his bosom, never pulls it out full of silver. The world is a thing which will be attended, a mistress that can never be had without a due courting. Besides,
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the idle person always hath the curse of God at his heels: God hath said, *Write this man a beggar*, when he said, *In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat thy bread*: and the apostle when he commanded, *That those that would not labour should not eat*, hath shut him out of good Christian's charity, and forbade him the poor man's basket. The idle person is the only one for whom the bountiful God hath made no provision. God hath provided a basket into which every good man will put something for him that cannot live by his hands. But for the idle person God hath provided nothing, but a *Bridewell* here, and an hell hereafter.

2. And is it not thus in the spiritual trade? There are some that cannot go to hell without a drum and trumpet before them; in proclaiming their sin as *Sodom*, they proclaim their damnation also, and so as he that can but read a line in Scripture, may run and read it. God in damning them shall but answer their frequent prayers, or imprecation in that
Pagan

Pagan dialect. The mischief of it is, That these men will not suffer others to go to heaven if they can help; mere dogs in the churches manger, they abhor the name and thing of religion, yet will prescribe to others, and be the informers against them for worshipping that God whom their souls impudently defy and contemn. These now, like profane *Esau*, for a *mess of pottage despise their birthright*. Forlorn and desperate souls, how just shall their damnation be! But Oh! that hell might open its mouth for none but these prodigies of abominations! There are others steal themselves into a bottomless pit, they do not so openly despise, but they *neglect the great salvation* of the gospel. These men are not drunkards, no dammees, no profane swearers and cursers, no adulterers; but there is one *no more* belongs to them, they are no saints, a formal, lazy sort of professors, that have a mind to go to hell, and no man shall discern it. The voice of swearing, cursing, blaspheming,

ing, is not heard in their houses; but neither is the voice of prayer heard, they do not drink, but they will sleep themselves into damnation: For the business of repentance, faith, new obedience, mortification of lusts, self-denial, taking up the cross, following of Christ, they understand none of these things, nor mind them at all. It may be they go to church, but 'tis all one as if they staid at home. The sermon hath no more taste in their souls than the white of an egg. The first are a choleric kind of sinners, these a phlegmatic sort; the end of both will be the same, neither do the work which God hath given them to do, nor finish the course which God hath given them to run. They are both going the same road to a bottomless pit, only the first gallop, these only jog on: the first may come to their journeys end a little sooner, but at night they will both meet.

3. Oh! let the honest weaver consider this, That as his work in his loom will no more be done by sitting

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stil

still, and sleeping in his loom, than by breaking his threads, and throwing his shuttle out of the window; so the great business of his salvation may as much miscarry by a neglect, as by doing what is directly opposite to it; when he sees a man undone in his trade through mere neglect of it, going loitering up and down, and doing nothing. *Seneca*, (if I remember right) though he was an heathen, complained of time lost four ways; either by doing nothing, or doing ill; (which is worse than nothing) or by doing *aliud* something that is not our business; or by doing that which is good in an ill manner. A meditation worthy of a Christian, he loitereth in his spiritual employ, not only who doth what is ill, or who doth just nothing, but he also who doth too much of other things, or good things in a slight, careless, perfunctory manner. Methinks, when the weaver seeth his neighbour ruined by laziness, or perfunctory, slovenly doing of his work, he might reasonably reflect upon his soul, and say,

say, my soul, take heed thou also
dost not thus perish.

The P O E M.

*Two things the ruin of the tradesman be,
Sloth luxury:*

*One throws away what he doth gain,
And should maintain*

*His family, their-belly and their back
Smarts for his sack.*

*He whores he plays away his needful food,
And drinks their blood:*

*After a while he counts; All he hath won
Is, hee's undone.*

*The other idle at his shop-door stands
Folding his hands;*

*'Tis death to him to work, hee'l also come
To the same doom.*

*Both die in jailes, though these do faster go,
Others more slow.*

*'Tis but the same case, in the spiritual trade:
Some men are made*

*Heirs of hell, by an excess in riot;
Others by quiet*

*In active negligence: some do proclaim
Their open shame,*

*And tell men waither they are bound; They tell
All thy'r for hell,*

*Others (as they think) with some little wit
Steal to the pit.*

*Some wretches cry God damn me; Some would have
God them to save,*

*But will not ask it; wages they expect
But do neglect*

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*The work, to which heaven must be the pay
At the judgment-day,*

*My soul! shun both those rocks, thou sailest well,
And avoidst hell.*

*If thou comest to hell at last, what-ere,
Why thou comest there,*

*Will no refreshing be, to thee to think;
Whether by drink,*

*By cheating, swearing, murder, or by less
unrighteousness,*

*Or by neglect of what thou shouldst have done,
Thou beest undone.*

*Hell will be hell, both unto the profane
And careless man.*



C H A P. IV.

*Some work away their living, some trust
it away.*

O B S E R V A T I O N 4.

1. **M**ILLE modis morimur. It is
an old observation, That
though we all come one way into
the world, and that through difficul-
ties, yet we die many ways. There
are more than one way indeed by
which men come by their trading-
stocks, yet not so many as there are
by

by which men may lose them, and prove beggars. We have already considered the two main, luxury and laziness, but these are not all. I observe, That some work away what they have. 'Tis pity, that the industrious hand should make poor; but so it is in the world very often: Either they toil in stuffs out of fashion, and not vendible; or they do their work slovenly; or they trust to a market for their works and fail; or some other thing happens that the men are undone by working slovenly, or indiscreetly: When as there were no such way to live as working, did they work the works which are acceptable in that time, or work handsomely and prudently. We by experience see many men may be undone, as well by working, as by rioting and playing.

2. I observe again, That many are undone by trusting; either because the persons they trust are not responsible, or because they give longer time than their stock will bear; or the persons they trust are unfaithful to their words.

3. Me-

3. Methinks I see something analogous to this in our spiritual concerns: Some lose heaven by a vain and groundless trusting, some by an unwary and ill circumstanced working. Go through a whole city of professors, and ask them how they hope hereafter to be saved; they will tell you, they hope, they rest, they trust in the Lord Jesus Christ; when as to many who say so, Christ will be no better than a broken staff, and a bruised reed, which if a man leans upon, it will only run into, and wound his hand. Not that our blessed Lord may not be trusted, for he is *able to save to the utmost those who by faith come unto him*; nor that he is not faithful, *for he is faithful who hath promised*; (faith the apostle) but because they had no ground to trust in him living, and being resolved to live and do as they do. No man can lay a natural claim to heaven, no man can challenge the salvation of his soul as a debt to him: We are told that eternal life is the gift of God, and being so, none hath any pretence of ground to trust
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in God and Christ for it, but upon some promise. For upon this hypothesis, that all men shall not be saved, who can pretend to any lively hope, to any justly-founded confidence, unless he hath our Lord's word to show, wherein he hath promised, that though *Tophet be prepared of old for some*, yet it is not for him, he is one *for whom the kingdom is prepared?* Now none can pretend a right to a limited and conditional promise, until he findeth fulfilled in him, or that he hath fulfilled the conditions, to the performance of which the good thing promised is annexed. Were it not ridiculous, supposing one of us had promised a great reward to any that would do such a piece of work, for to talk of trusting in us for the reward without any doing of the work, especially doing the quite contrary: even those things to the doing of which we have threatned the greatest severities we can use? God hath indeed made many great and precious promises of eternal life and salvation, to those who *believe in Jesus Christ,*

Christ, who work righteousness, who do the things which please him, &c. He hath as plainly said: The fearful, the unbelieving, the abominable, the murderers, whoremongers, sorcerers, idolaters and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, Revelation 21. 8. He hath bidden us not be deceived, 1 Corinthians 6. 9. neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate persons, nor abusers of themselves with mankind; nor thieves, nor covetous persons, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. If notwithstanding any such person will pretend to trust in Christ for salvation, he abuseth his own soul, and by his presumptuous trusting runs himself upon damnation. A presumptuous confidence destroys its ten thousands.

4. And are there not others who work themselves into hell? What shall we say to *Israel* of whom the apostle testifieth, *That though they followed after the law of righteousness, yet they attained not to the law of righteousness: Wherefore? Because they sought*
it

it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. There was indeed a way to heaven revealed by meer working, but now (saith the apostle) *the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith.* Many will not understand this, and look still for nothing but a legal righteousness. Have you not sometimes seen it thus with a poor bee, it comes home where the hive was, the hive is removed to another place, the bee knows it not, nor will stir to look for it, but there lies groveling upon the old place till it dies? Do not you see it in the weaver's trade? There were some kinds of stuffs heretofore (possibly in the time when this or that man served his apprenticeship) that were in fashion, and there was a great market for them, and many grew rich by them; but they have been out a long time, the dull tradesman considers it not but goes on still making them, and is very busy, but when he hath done, there is no market for them. God of old said to *Adam, Do this and live*: Salvation was exhibited upon the term of working
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only ; God hath altered the case. Now the promise is to him that believeth as well as worketh, and *without faith* (faith the apostle) *it is impossible to please God* : Many heedless souls consider not this ; they work and work themselves into hell. God will hereafter say unto them, *Who hath required this at your hands ?* Though (it may be) God did require and doth require still the doing of the things which they do (for so he did require those duties considered materially, of which yet he saith, who hath required them ?) But he hath required them to be done in faith, out of a principle of evangelical love, in a sincerity of obedience, having a single respect and eye to his glory ; not being done under these circumstances, they are things he hath not required, and no better than cutting off a dog's neck, and the offering up of swines blood ; (as God himself speaketh of the Jewish services irregularly performed. There's no market in heaven now for mere works more than for an idle, inoperative faith.

faith. The Papist, the Formalist, all ruin themselves by working: Who ever looks for salvation by a mere legal righteousness, or by a superficial outside performance, will find himself a beggar at last, when Christ shall say to those that shall plead; They have prayed in his name, and have prophesied in his name, and in his name cast out devils: *Depart from me, I know you not, ye workers of iniquity.*

5. What then, shall a man be saved *without works*? By no means, nor by mere works, *we are saved by faith*, (faith the apostle) and *faith* (faith the same apostle) *worketh by love*: Works dipt in the blood of Christ must bring a soul to heaven; when we have talked what we can, he that believeth will and must work, but every one that worketh doth not believe; and, *He that believeth not is damned already*, faith our Saviour. Happy is he that can compound both these as well in practice as in judgment, but he is miserable who divides what God hath put together. I always thought it a good rule for all Christians, to be-

lieve as much as if works had no influence upon his salvation, and to work as much as if heaven were to be earned by meer working. God forbid, that we should say works are needless, because we say *faith in Christ* is needful.

The P O E M.

*May men by working be undone
How many hazards do they run,
Who trade for bread?
What needs sollicitude? Then thus,
Let's trust him more who saith to us,
We shall be fed.
But trusting may undoe us too;
Say then, What shall poor tradesmen do?
Trust warily;
And work hard too; for work and trust,
Together make the tradesman must,
When others fly.
Say not that in the spiritual trade,
And by trust are happy made,
By trust alone,
Trust without ground to trust upon,
Is but a bold presumption,
Men by't undone.
But those who can believe, and do,
What-ever God them calleth to,
Shall happy be;
And when the solifidians fail,
And Papists too, he shall entail
Felicity*

Unto

The Art of Weaving spiritualized. 189

Unto his soul, which neither faith,
Nor works alone, (so scripture saith)
Can save from hell.

Faith justifies alone ; but yet
Is not alone. Works follow it ;

Faith bears the bell,
Because it lyeth hold on him,
Who justifies the soul from sin :
Whose only name

Is that, by which we saved be ;
Without whom to felicity
None ever came.

Happy is he who doth compound
What in the holy write is found,
By God combin'd :

But wo to him that dares to part
(To gratify sophistick art,)
What he hath join'd.

O let my soul believe as much,
As if my faith alone were such,
As could it save ;

But let it work as much also,
As if't should for what it can do,
It's heaven have.

C H A P.



C H A P V.

Usually those have their eyes abroad most about them: and when alone, are most happy in their judgments and inventions, and thrive most.

O B S E R V A T I O N 5.

1. **I** Observe a twofold spirit amongst tradesmen, and as among others, so particularly amongst weavers. Some are men of a poor, private, obscure spirit: Their eyes look right before them, that's all: They have been bred to this or that trade, to be used in this or that method, and they jog on, and on, as we say, buy, make, sell the same commodities their masters did, neither will turn to the right-hand nor to the left. Such now as these I have seen in the world with much ado quitting their teeth and their taylor, by all their labour. Others I have observed of brisker spirits, their eyes are behind them and before them, and

and round about them; they look upon their apprenticeship not as seven years service to their particular master, but to the world, advantaging them to a general knowlege. This spirit in a weaver makes him understand, that he was not bound seven years to learn to make either, *Rashes* or *Tametts*, or *Cheynies*, or any other particular kind of stuff: But the mystery of weaving, to know how to make any stuff. This man considereth the world rightly, the whole scheme of it passing away, the surface of it now wearing off, new eyes, new fancies daily rising in it to be pleased, and accordingly accommodates himself to it, and hath his eyes about him, and his reason within him, his eyes observing what stuffs are most worn, most acceptable to the eye of the present generation, and to them he sets himself: This man usually thrives better than his neighbour.

2. I observe again, That in trades, and more especially in the weaver's trade, those who have the best inventions,

tions, and can best compare things with things, and who have the best judgments, thrive best: Indeed judgment is that which makes a man excel, let his way and course of life be what it will. It is that which makes the scholar, that which makes the tradesman, and the merchant; indeed every one, let his course and way of life be of what kind it will. The weaver must judge of the best yarns, the best workman, the most acceptable colours, or compositions of yarns, and mixtures of colours, the best markets, and of many other things. Invention also hath a great influence, though not in all, yet in many ways and courses of livelihoods. It hath a great influence upon the excellency of a scholar, and so of a weaver. For there is much to be found out in weaving; indeed in most trades and ways of livelihood, more than is already discovered. Every day teacheth another, and brings forth new notions in philosophy, in physic, in mathematics, and so likewise in methods of trading, and dealing

ing in the world : He that will only run round, and go in a tract, will find that he doth but tire himself to little purpose, hunting the world which in the mean time flieth from him.

3. I observe thirdly, That God rarely giveth to any one all those gifts which make one to excel in any course of life. One man hath an excellent fancy and invention, but possibly no judgment : Another hath an excellent judgment upon another's fancy and invention, but a dull and heavy invention of his own ; a third hath neither, but a nimble hand at his work ; a fourth hath a neat hand, and doth what he doth curiously and exactly, he hath no dexterity, but is wonderfully slow at it. Some one man of many hath all united, he hath a good fancy and judgment, he is both neat and quick, &c.

4. I cannot but observe, That in the spiritual trade, there is something which beareth a proportion unto this. I know, truth is of great antiquity, and the oldest proposition is the best,

the old way is the good way. But the corruption of ages hath been like snow upon a path; it requires some search, reason and judgment, and pains too, to find out where that same old way lay. New lights are derided, and new truth counted but a contradiction *in adjecto*. For really no truth is new but coevous to that God who hath stiled himself, *the truth*. There hath been two, and but two remarkable innovations in religion warrantable: Warrantable, because made by God himself. The one upon the giving of the law at mount *Sinai*: The other upon the publishing the gospel; for though there was a worship of God, and that by sacrifices, before *Aaron's* time, (when the world was 2000 years old and upward) yet he undertakes a great task that will undertake to prove the whole order of the Judaical worship in practice before that time. Christ altered nothing at his coming in the moral law, but it is most certain that he abrogated the law contained in ordinances, the whole ritual law; and instituted a gospel-

gospel-worship, which shall never more be altered. It is certain also, that the canon of scripture was not sealed, till after Christ's ascension into heaven, though we say he added no new moral precepts. Thus far all the Christian world is agreed, that the whole system of divine truth is revealed in the Scriptures of the old and new Testament, and the whole method of worship must be found there; though of it something is to be learned from precept, something from example, some things are plainly set down, others must be gathered by consequences in the use of our reason. Hence the variety of men's judgments, and different apprehensions in things of God. Now there are some Christians, who either have not or will not use their powers in *searching out truth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual*, but take it to be enough for them, to believe as the church believeth, and to do what the church bids them do; having no regard to the apostle commanding them, 1. *To prove all things, and hold*

fast that which is good, and again, to try the spirits whether they be of God or no, &c. I observe these Christians little improving in *knowledge, faith or holiness*. The woman of Samaria, John 4. was of this size in religion. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain, (saith she) *Sic a patribus accepimus* (saith he in the council) and met with a smart answer—*Imo errantes ab errantibus*; erring children from erring parents. But now there are others who do understand their souls were given them for other purposes: If Paul preacheth, they will with those well-born Bereans, *search the scripture, to see if it be truth which he saith*; they are inquisitive after truth, and will examine all their principles and practices by the touch-stone of holy writ, bringing them to the law and the testimony: These are the thriving Christians, and these alone have the promise. *If thou cryest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding, if thou seekest her as silver, and searcheth for her as for hidden treasure: Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find*
the

the knowlege of thy God, Proverbs 2. 3, 4, 5. The promise of improvement in the knowlege and fear of the Lord, is not made to dull souls, that believe all that is told them, and imposed by confident persons upon them; but to him that *examines, seeks, proves, &c.* He is next door to an infidel that only believes divine propositions, in the belief, denial, or misbelief of which his salvation depends, merely because his father believed so, or so practised; or because any number of men (call them by what name you please, so long as you allow them fallible men) so impose upon him. Let men mock so long as they please, though there be no new truth, yet there are new revelations and discoveries of truth made to various persons in various ages; and there is new light breaks in, which is but a beam from that God who is light, only before that time eclipsed by the interpositions of ignorance and superstition, and the other variety of mens lusts and passions; and the thriving Christian will spend his time in winnowing the chaff from the wheat.

5. We have reason to adore the wisdom of God in the partial distribution of his gifts. The apostle admireth it as to the spiritual gifts, 1 Cor. 12. 8. *To one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge, by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues.* The apostle goes on, shewing that this various distribution of spiritual gifts was it, which did or might convince them of their usefulness one to another: That, as in the natural body, those members which are more feeble, may appear necessary, the same divine wisdom we may see in God's distribution of those gifts which are of a lower order: One weaver hath an excellent fancy to invent, another hath a more excellent judgment; one works more neatly, another more nimbly. If every weaver were good at all the parts of his work,

work, they would not understand their usefulness one to another, nor the need they have one of another; but in the variety of dispensation of these gifts each man is commended, and his usefulness discovered to his neighbour; so as the head cannot say to the foot, nor the foot to the hand, I have no need of thee. If men would but consider this, we should not have so many brutes as we have, who controul the wisdom of God in biting and devouring, in seeking advantages to rifle and plunder one another, as if this were the way to promote the prosperity of a place, which indeed is the direct way to turn it into a nettle-bush. God so ordereth his gifts, that one man hath his subordinacy to another: And indeed this is seen by men used in trades generally. The troublers of God's heritage are generally such as live in ale-houses, or whose employment is much the same as of Caterpillars, to eat up every green herb while they are too lazy to plant any; a generation from whom as God hath

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no honour, so their country hath no further profit, than what ariseth from an impost-pon the salt and spirit of urine, or the beer or wine from whence it proceeds.

The P O E M.

*Old truth, like wine is always best,
A notion can't be true,
And also new.*

*'Tis gray hair'd time which must attest
What-ere is sacred truth,
Error hath youth;*

*Yet 'tis not th' old, but th' oldest age
Alone, can justify
Th' antiquity*

*Of notions. From the first each page
Hath fully blurred been
By lust and sin.*

*When Christ and his apostles were
In our meridian,
Truth shin'd alone.*

*But since that they did leave our sphere,
A darkness fell upon
Each nation.*

*Though by degrees yet then began
To rise, the foggy mist
Of antichrist.*

*'Twas in the apostles time. The man
Whom they call'd the man of sin,
Did's work begin.*

*His work was to deform truth's face,
The good old paths to cover,
None might pass over;*

To blind the ways of truth and grace

That none might see or know

Where Christ did go.

Hence latter ages laboured have,

Resisting unto blood

Those that withstood :

To dig the truth out of its grave,

Desirous but to see

Old veritie.

Hence truth which in itself's not new :

Yet unto us appears

Not full of years.

The nations so appearing grew

In the old paradise,

Where grew no lies

Only the winter suffered not

There blossoms nor did suit

Their bearing fruit,

Their lasting root, yet did not :

But watched a better hour

To bud and flower.

Who so despiseth truth, because

It new to him doth show,

Shall never grow,

Nor understand the sacred laws,

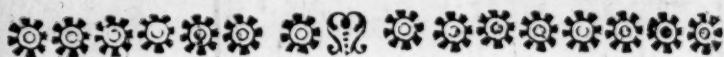
Which each new day expounds

On better grounds.

C H A P.

C c

To



C H A P. VI

Of the various Causes of the Decay of Trade.

O B S E R V A T I O N 6.

THE causes of the decay, or abatement of trade, is a noble enquiry, and especially for us who live upon a spot of earth that is incompass'd with the sea. Whatever they may do that live on a continent, it is certain, that those who live in islands (if they have not a sufficiency within themselves) cannot live without trade; nor can any people without it live happily. The people are very thin in any place, if they be not too many to be employed in mere tilling the ground, and making necessities for one another, who are natives of the place: So as either a great number must be idle, (which is the bane of any place) or they must be employed in providing for other places, which have not what we have. This maketh trade necessary; to say

no-

nothing of the genius of most, not contenting themselves with bare food and raiment. A late author, in his Compassionate Enquiry, tells us, and very truly, 'That trade opens a passage to the discovery of other countries, and of the works of God and man, of nature and art. That it is the great incentive and instrument of human society; it makes all mankind of one body, and by mutual intercourse to serve the occasions, supply the needs, and minister to the delight and entertainment one of another. It enlargeth the minds of men, as well as their fortunes, insomuch that any nation is unpolite, unbred, and half barbarous without it. It inures men to hardship and danger; it instructs them in subtilty, and all the arts of self-security. It also adds much to the beauty, power and strength of a nation, and to the riches, and revenue of a prince.' A noble *eulogium*---After all which, Statists may see reason to enquire, Whether any religion, or reason, or state, can endure the abatement, or diminution,

or destruction of trade, by any impositions in matters of religion, which the law of God doth not expressly require at their hands. For amongst the things that have been found the eminent causes of the ruin of trade:

1. *Persecution of men for their different apprehensions in the things of God*, hath been so universal and eminent, as all the world hath taken notice of it. By persecution I mean a violent prosecution of men, to the loss of their lives, liberties, or estates, let it be by the execution of a law or not. The law excuseth the fact it may be from oppression or tyranny. An human law in the case, was pleaded in the highest persecution ever was: *We have a law, (say the Jews) and by that law he ought to die*, speaking concerning Christ. This hath been so eminently proved by a worthy hand, that nothing need be added to it. Let any one but reflect upon those towns and cities, where liberty is granted in the things of God, and those places where the Popish inquisitions take place, and compare the state of the one

one with the other, and there needs no further witness. What brought the trade both of this place and some others in *England*, but D *Alva's* persecution in *Flanders*? And I dare say, this one thing shall, to the end of the world, be the ruin of trade in any place. The power of conscience is exceeding great! Besides that in all trading there must be such an intermixing of mens estates, such a dependency of the well-being of one man upon another, as necessarily requires the freedom and security of all who are of any considerable fortunes. In a persecution none knows who he may trust his estate with, nor how far he may adventure: In short it plucks up all trade by the roots; dispirits men from dealing or adventuring, which makes persecution a thing, though consonant to the lusts of some ill-natured, peevish, self-willed men, yet contrary to the true interest of all men.

2. A second cause is (the daughter of this mother) *transplantation* or *transmigration*, this persecution causeth:

Men

Men will endure any thing rather than oppression in the matters of their conscience. Those who think, that riches, and a course of trade in a place, will stake men down, and nail them to their posts, while they scourge them according to their malice, forget how many thousand tradesmen under *Alva's* persecution removed out of *Flanders* into *England*, and how many thousands removed from *Old* into *New-England*, despising their native country, and all their interests here, the dangers of the seas, the difficulties they could not but foresee, of making a desolate wilderness habitable: All these were nothing in their eyes, so they might keep a conscience void of offence toward God, in the great matter of his worship. Transplantation or removal of tradesmen in any considerable number, from any place where they were fixed, is so obvious a cause of the decay and ruin of the trade of that place, that it need not be enlarged upon; who so seeth it not is blinder than a beetle, and deserveth to be beg-

ged, till he can tell the world, how the channel can run as full when the water is let out into several streams, as when it had but one tract.

3. A third cause of the abatement of trade is, the multiplication of those who are occupied in it. The world is a finite thing, there is enough for it, and it hath but its measure to give: And as it is impossible, that supposing a father to have ten sons, and another two, tho' they both have equal estates, that they should both give equal portions to every child; so neither can the world satisfy a multitude of beggars as well as if it had but a few. This abatement of trade is not in the general, but as to particulars in the whole as much is gotten as ever; but few individuals get so much, nor is it possible they should, unless we could imagine a proportionable multiplication of persons in the world to be fed or clothed, to the effects of the multiplied tradesmen, who work to feed, clothe and adorn them.

4. A fourth cause of the decay of
trade

trade is, the false making of commodities, and mens false dealing one with another in bargains, &c. A thing for the repute of which, we in *England* (how justly I know not) infinitely suffer beyond the seas. Truth give all things a reputation, falsehood is as constant a blot, and will be the ruin of that man, or any number of men that use it. It may (like wine in a fever) seem a little to refresh his pulse at first, but it will empty it at last. The reward of the liar is, when once known, never to be further trusted.

5. A fifth cause is, mens studious under-selling one another. St. *John* told us long since, that *the whole world lies in wickedness*, and truly a great part of it lies in this piece of wickedness, being studious to outgo one another. Now, tho' this be every one's duty in that which is good, and possibly lawful, if duly circumstanced, in things which are either good or evil, as they are used; yet it may be so pursued as it may be very evil.

6. Lastly, I observe, That hardly
any

any trades will maintain their glory, without some government; every particular tradesman having neither wit nor honesty enough to be a law to himself. In all considerable trades therefore, prudent statesmen thought fit to make corporations, where the multitude are under the inspection, rule and government of the most experienced, wise and discreet men of that occupation. And most trades, which to any considerable degree multiply tradesmen, either have such governors, or in a short time come to nothing for want of them.

Let me now come to make some spiritual reflections upon these ordinary observations.

1. I cannot but from hence first observe, the mighty power of conscience, awakned to the fear of sinning against God. *Quid non mortalia pectora cogit?* Men of no conscience may make a jeer of it, none knoweth the power of it, but he that feelth it. It turns a prison into a delectable garden, a scorching flame into a bed of roses, and no wonder that it

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doth

doth so, for what is it but God's vicergerent in the little world of man? God's interpreter to every soul. It is a great misfortune to a person if it be suborned, and gives in a false verdict. No man can act against it, though every one is not bound to act according to every precept, or dictate of it. The power of its regrets, and reflections for disobedience, are such as none can stand under; and therefore none is bound to humour any in running the hazard of them.

2. The tendernefs of God to the tender consciences of his people is also as obvious an observation from hence. Men of the world can think of nothing for them but goals and Bridewells. One while they are thinking to jeer them out of their consciences by a ballad, another while to rail them out of them by a foul mouth, anon to cudgel them out of them. God doth not so with them in his providence. If they cannot have a room in *Flanders*, he will provide for them in *England*; if they cannot have a resting place in *Europe*,
he

he will provide them one in *America*, making for them a way in the wilderness, and hewing them out an hiding place through the rocks, and in a desert land; and the nation that will not be a quiet habitation for them that fear him, God will judge. If they will have no tender consciences in their cities and ports, they shall have no trade; to tell them they shall have no religion, will not trouble them, it may be the decay of their trade will. Let the conscience be truly tender, fearing to sin against God; and let the world be as cruel, as hard-hearted, as bloody as it will, they will find they have a tender Father. Never any lost any thing, nor shall lose, by being afraid to sin against the Lord that made them, that bought them with his precious blood. A man indeed may fear too much, but there are few, very few that err on that hand, there are thousands more that fear too little. *The simple pass on (saith Solomon) and are punished.*

3. What a vast difference there is

between the earthly and the spiritual weaver? The multiplication of tradesmen in the former, abates and spoils the profit of the trade. *I would all the Lord's people (saith Moses) were prophets:* Durst any poor weaver in this town say, I would all the people in this city were weavers? The reason is obvious; the world hath not gold and silver enough to give to every one. Hence is the scrambling for it, and all the world's game is, *Catch he who catch can:* But God hath grace and glory enough to give to all that will trade for heaven, so as none by getting hinders another. The world cannot receive all the cloths and stuffs that would be made, if a tenth part of the men in it were weavers: But all the prayers and praises, all the homages and exercises of holiness, which the world can bring forth, are too little for that God to whom they ascend as an homage. Who would not be in love with that trade, that were not capable of being abated by multiplication of tradesmen, and yet would most certainly
bring

bring in such profit, as *eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor can enter into the heart of man to conceive?* Such are the things which God hath prepared for them that love and serve him.

4. Again, doth false making of wares, and false dealing with merchants and customers, ruin the trading of any place? And what is it that ruins the spiritual trade but the same thing? When the power of godliness is turned into a form, religion into a meer formality and outside shew and appearance. When men glory in shew and not in reality, when men are false in their acts of devotion, and false in their conversation, God will deal with them no longer; but remove his name and his gospel from them, to a people that will bring forth better fruit.

5. I observe, That in trading, every one's study is to get his work done cheaper than another, and to undersell his neighbour. Have we not too much of this in the spiritual trade too? Doth not the falseness of our hearts prompt us to come off as cheap with
God

God as we can? Long sermons, long prayers, are thought needfuls. We would fain put off to God that which hath cost us nothing, and which indeed is little worth: But God hath cursed him, that *hath a male in his flock, and bringeth unto him a female*. We are bound to love and serve the Lord our God with all our heart, and all our soul, and all our strength.

6. Lastly, I observe, That in all trades, when tradesmen multiply to any great number, the trade never thrives long without a prudent regulation and government, all men having not (as I said before) either wit or honesty enough to be a law to themselves; nor doth the trade thrive much, Unless the governors be discreetly chosen. 2. Unless they justly discharge their trust. To this purpose, ordinarily such tradesmen are left to chuse their own governors, as being best acquainted with the trade, and the persons that have most skill in it, and have best approved their honesty in the managery of it. *In those days* (saith the scripture, *Acts 6.*
1.) *when*

1.) *when the number of the disciples were multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations.* In multitudes corruptions will multiply. This made the apostles turn them into a corporation, authorising them, to look out seven men amongst themselves, whom they might set over that affair. A government is necessary in the church, and originally it chose its own officers. But let a trade have what governors it will, if either they know not their office, or knowing it wait not upon it, or in pretence waiting upon it, yet act directly contrary to their trust, winking at false weights or measures, discouraging the best tradesman, encouraging the worst and most false, the trade must necessarily be ruined. And thus it will be in the church of God, that drive the spiritual trade. If either it hath no officers and government, or if it hath such as know not their work and duty of their place; or though they know it, yet through laziness,

laziness, or, greediness of filthy lucre wait not on it: Or, though in presence they wait upon it, yet in very deed, act directly contrary to their trust, smiting those that fear the Lord instead of those that hate him, discouraging the best professors and practitioners in godliness, instead of the open enemies of truth and holiness; the spiritual trade of that place, that hath such a course, must necessarily abate or at best go on but in corners.



F I N I S.



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Wil
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Rob
Ja
Joh
Joh
Wil
Wil
John

A List of the Subscribers NAMES. 217



☞ As the greatest part of the Subscribers are Weavers, thole who are not are mentioned.

Hugh Jack
David Wilkie
James Shanks
Cloud Wilkinfon
Andrew Shaw
Robert M'Donald
David Miller
James Finlay
Robert Galbraith
Mungo Muir
James Wilfon
Archibald Watfon
James Calder
John Marshall
James Rodger
Alexander Downie
Andrew Hardie
James Scott
James Chapman
Robert Johnfton
Robert Campbell
William Watfon
Robert Baird
James Duncan
James Forfyth
John Graham
Thomas Watfon
John Provan
William Duncan
James Buchanan
William Finlay 12 copies
John Chrifty
Robert Walker
James Storie
John M'Kean
John Jamiefon
William Zuill
William Wilfon
John Porter

William Finlay
Robert Duplop
James Adam
David Dobie
John Andrew
Alexander Barr
Alexander M'Kechrie
Andrew Minzies
John Fyfe
Thomas Cochran
James Smith
John Kerr
John Hill
James Wright
John Tennant
John Graham
John Bruce
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David Niell
John Caldwell
James Bulloch
John Shaw
James Muir
John Gilkrift
John Buchanan
William Bruce
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John Claiton
William Struthers
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James Perrie
William Stevenpans
Archibald M'Aver
William Feandry
Archibald Turner
John Smith
John Rufsel
Daniel Walker
James Pettegrew

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James Henry
John Thomson
John Chalmers
Archibald Burnet
Walter Micklejohn
David M'Queen
James Raeburn
John Miller
John Walker
William Hugall
Thomas Jack
Malcom M'Calay

John Algie
John Marshall
George Boyde
John Anderson
James Brown
Thomas Cochran
Alexander Smith
John M'Cracken
David Thomson
John Howat
John M'Niel
Alexander Wilson hofier
William M'Culloch barber
Alexander Brown shoemaker
John Ferguson Heeler
Duncan Wier
Robert Provan
William M'Aulay
John M'Calay
Archibald M'Fadyen
John Cunningham

GORBALS

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William Dyche
William Craig
James Allafon 6 copies
William Bogle
James Wilson
James Muir
John Muir
Thomas Bryfon
Robert Hallady

Andrew M'Donald
John Andrew
Thomas Muir
James Gardner
Bailie William Bruce
James Hastie
John Strethern
James Baird
John Gordon
Allan M'Aulay
John Hervey 12 copies
Robert Buchanan
John Gilmour
James Manderfon
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CALTON

Robert Soutter
Robert Steel
William Rosburgh
John M'Farlane
William Walker
John Miller
Andrew Gardner
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John Bane
John Comery
James Calles
James Dawson
Duncan Robertson
William Wadell
William Hamilton
Mark Benny
Matthew Salmon
William Stevenson
John Phillips
James Allan
James Bryfon
Dougall M'Farlane
Robert Barton
David Thomson
James Robertson
David Zuill
William Chaplain
William Wilson hofier

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ANDERSTON

James M'Indoe
William Forsyth
Thomas Buchanan
Alexander Chapman
John Cunnell
Peter M'Lintock
John Whitefield
John Cuthbertson
John Brown 6 copies
John Harbertson 6 copies
John Farnes
Michael Buchanan
Gavin Miller
Hugh Watson
Peter Wier

PAISLEY

John Young
James White
Archibald Jamieson
John Turner
James Clark
George Temple 12 copies
William M'Alpine
James M'Kean
Charles Stevenson
William Ingles
William Bell
Adam Beg
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John Stewart
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James mickles
James Lang
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Robert Ferguson
william Reid
James Pedie 12 copies
James Paterfon
John Cowie
robert orr
agnis carccl
thomas barber
alexander ramsay
peter wright
James thomson
william glen
John paton
John bogs 12 copies
John gilmour
John m'moustrey
walter scott
James govan
John whitehill
John harvie 12 copies
andrew gemmell

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